

MOTHERS', PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' AND  
SPEECH-LANGUAGEPATHOLOGISTS' SHARED BOOK READING WITH  
PRESCHOOLERS IN TAIWAN

By

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore mothers', preschool teachers', and speech-language pathologist's (SLP) shared book reading practices with preschoolers in Taiwan. Ten mothers, 10 preschool teachers, 10 SLPs and 30 preschoolers aged from 3 years 2 months old to 5 years 5 months old participated in this study. All participants were Taiwanese. Adults completed questionnaires about their shared book reading practices and participated in a shared book reading session with a preschool child using an unfamiliar book. The shared book reading between adult and child dyads were video and audio recorded. Mothers and preschool teachers read with typically developing children and SLPs read with children with specific language impairment.

It was found that half of the mothers began to read to their children around one year of age. Most of the mothers read picture books with their child multiple times a week for 5 to 20 minutes in one book reading session. Also, mothers asked significantly more decontextualized questions than contextualized questions during shared book reading, with a large effect size. The mothers' level of education may be a factor associated with their greater use of decontextualized questions compared to contextualized questions.

Most of the Taiwanese preschool teachers read with children multiple times a week for 10 to 20 minutes in one book reading session. The most often selected reading material was a picture book. There was no difference between the teachers' production of contextualized compared to decontextualized questions; however, a moderate effect size was present. The age of the child being read to and the level of teacher education may have affected the use of contextual questions, with more contextual questions being used with three year olds and by teachers with less education.

A majority of the Taiwanese SLPs conducted shared book reading with children multiple times a week and each book reading session took 10 to 20 minutes for most of the SLPs. Picture books were most often selected by SLPs. No significant difference was present between SLPs' production of contextualized and decontextualized questions. However, a medium effect size was evident. Children's age might have influenced the SLPs' types of questions during shared book reading. SLPs tended to ask more contextualized questions than decontextualized questions when reading with 3 year olds compared to 4 and 5 year olds.

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## Introduction

Cultural differences impact how adults provide emergent literacy practices (Kato-Otani & van Kleeck, 2004; Simmons & Johnston, 2006; Yarosz & Barnett, 2001). When working with children from different cultures, it is important to understand children's emergent literacy environments in order to implement shared book reading interventions. Shared book reading, the interaction that occurs between an adult and a child when reading or looking at a book (Ezell & Justice, 2005), is a common emergent literacy activity adults conduct with children. Research supports the effectiveness of storybook sharing for increasing vocabulary development, general linguistic performance, and emergent literacy knowledge (Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Diehl & Vaughn, 2010; Whitehurst, Arnold, Epstein, Angell, Smith, & Fischel, 1994; Whitehurst, Epstein, Angell, Payne, Crone, & Fischel, 1994). Emergent literacy environments have been considered to have an important influence on preschool children's development of emergent literacy knowledge (Roberts, Jurgens, & Burchinal, 2005; Senechal, LeFevre, Thomas & Daley, 1998). Children's emergent literacy skills are influenced by the number of children's books they can access, the amount of time spent on shared book reading, other emergent literacy events (i.e., writing and rhyming), and qualitative characteristics of literacy and literacy-related interactions (i.e., the degree of instructional support provided during book reading) (Leseman & De Jong, 1998). Early introduction to books and participation in

emergent literacy or literacy-related interactions are seen as critical in preparing children for instruction in reading and writing at school (Leseman & De Jong, 1998).

Emergent literacy is learned through family and community interactions. Family routines, histories, expectations, and communication help to form a social base for the interactive process of literacy learning (Hsu, 2001). Understanding cultural differences of the literacy environment and how shared reading is conducted with children is important when applying book reading intervention with children from different cultures who have reading disorders (Hammer et al., 2005; Melzi & Caspi, 2005). To be most effective, teachers and SLPs (SLPs) need to carefully heed information about cultural differences in values, beliefs, and practices that may affect whether and how book reading interventions are received, carried out, and maintained over time by family members from various cultural backgrounds (van Kleeck, 2006). As an example, in middle-class European American culture, shared book reading begins very young, occurs frequently and in one-on-one dyadic interaction. Parents have expressed that reading to young children should be fun and engaging for the child and involve discussing the book and eliciting the child's participation in discussing the book (van Kleeck, 2006). Shared-book reading also involves the adult's efforts to get the child thinking about information presented in books at increasingly higher levels (van Kleeck, 2006). Cultural differences exist in different



areas of shared book reading practices. For example, the prevalence of daily book sharing in African American and Latino families is less than that for European American families (Caspe, 2009; Lopez, Barrueco, Feinauer, & Miles, 2007; van Kleeck, 2006; Yarosz & Barnett, 2001). In some European American families,, children are encouraged to be talkative and verbally assertive, whereas other cultural groups may consider such behavior to be immature, undisciplined, or even, rude. For cultural groups who believe learning is accomplished more by observation and listening, interrupting a book to talk about it during shared book reading may not be appropriate. These different values and beliefs in different cultures impact parents' shared book reading practices and how SLPs and teachers might conduct shared book reading with preschoolers. Janes and Kermani (2001) found barriers when implementing dialogic reading intervention with Latino families because of cultural considerations that were not initially apparent. Dialogic reading (DR) (Whitehurst et al., 1994) is a technique to promote language acquisition during book reading by the use of questions, recasts of children's verbalizations, and praise, among other techniques. Analyses of parent-child reading interactions in Janes and Kermani (2001) showed that the researchers had difficulty teaching the parents to use higher level questions from the text and that shared reading itself was reported by the parents to not be an enjoyable experience. The Latino families reported that they found reading

to be a punishment or that they never liked to read in interviews and group discussions. Due to these difficulties, their program had a dropout rate of 70%. In response to this, the researchers modified the program by developing storybooks with the help of the Latino families instead of using commercial storybooks. With the self-made books, the parents were able to dramatize the story and engage the child in shared reading. Janes' and Kermani's study clearly illustrates the different paths to emergent literacy that might be far more effective for members of diverse cultures. Emergent literacy practices such as shared book reading might be conducted differently in different cultures and these differences have impacts on the effectiveness of interventions. Therefore, when implementing interventions, it is crucial for SLPs and teachers to understand the values, beliefs, and practices of the emergent literacy environment in a given culture.

The purpose of this study is to understand the emergent literacy environment for preschoolers in Taiwan. Specifically, the emergent literacy practices of mothers of preschoolers, preschool teachers, and SLPs with their preschool clients will be examined through questionnaires completed by the adults and by having mothers, teachers, and SLPs participate in a dyadic shared book reading session with preschool children. The next section will consist of a literature review that will be divided into the following sections: (1) the theoretical framework of shared book reading; (2)

parental, preschool teachers', and SLPs' emergent literacy practices in European-American culture; (3) parental, preschool teachers' and SLPs' emergent literacy practices in Chinese culture; and (4) rationale for the study and the research questions.

### *Theoretical Framework of Shared Book Reading*

Shared book reading benefits children's language development by increasing their vocabulary and improving their reading and writing skills (Justice & Ezell, 2005; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Although many theories are available to describe how children acquire language, shared book reading has been particularly supported and influenced by Vygotsky's (1978) theory. The earliest parent-child interactions around books include exchanges in which the parent directs the child's attention to something noteworthy (usually a picture), offers some form of interpretation, and presents a label (Gee, 1992). Even though the adult is taking the lead in accomplishing this action, the completed sequence is an interactional achievement of parent and child in which each move is followed by another. The sequence is thus an interpsychological process constructed between two minds. Over time, the child will take the lead by pointing to an aforementioned object of interest and label it, showing that the process has become intrapsychological (Gee, 1992). As it relates to shared book reading, during the interpsychological process, a

parent points to pictures as a book is read. Over time, the child enters the intrapsychological stage and points to the pictures in the book during shared book reading.

Shared book reading is a social activity that can provide opportunities for children to learn language because the language that accompanies cooperative activities, such as shared book reading, is the major vehicle for the development of intersubjectivity, the internalization of concepts, the development of discourse meaning, and the development of higher cognitive processes. Children learn new concepts and develop cognition through interactive activities with adults that provide abundant language input and opportunities for children to use language. For example, during shared book reading, parents might talk about concepts, such as numbers and colors which may be new to children. Parents' questions and modeling allow children to think and to practice these new concepts. Children then learn these new concepts through answering parents' questions and having a dialogue with parents. Cooperative activities are effective in part because they allow instructional conversation exchanges between parents and children. To grasp a child's communicative intent requires careful listening, a willingness to guess about the meaning of the intended communication, and responsive adjustments to assist the

child's efforts (Lloyd & Fernyhough, 1999). A similar pattern is observed in storybook reading and other emergent literacy events (Heath, 1982; Teale, 1986).

Vygotsky describes intellectual skills as growing out of social interaction, identifying the social origins of cognition. From this perspective, the importance of shared reading is its social interactiveness with the adult serving initially as mediator between text and child and providing the opportunity for both adult and child to make or take meaning from the text. The event gives the child both a model of adult reading and a support system during the child's transition to independent reading. During story reading, meaning is negotiated throughout the event (Morrow, O'Connor, & Smith, 1990), and children construct new knowledge through adult-child communicative exchanges during shared book reading activities. This ability is demonstrated by the way in which children's verbalizations change with repeated exposure to a particular storybook (Kaderavek & Justice, 2002).

The activity of parent-child book reading is an identifiable speech event having relatively unique aspects in the experience of many young children. It is intensely focused, holding the child's attention to a single activity. A parent-child play activity such as puzzle-solving may be similarly focused, but it will lack the cognitive-linguistic richness of book reading interactions. Book reading activities require children's cognitive and language skills more than puzzle-solving activities

(Gee, 1992). For example, children need their cognitive skills to answer parents' questions about colors or shapes of pictures in the book. Children need their language and linguistic skills to describe pictures in the book. Book reading also gives parents more opportunities to model language using cognitive and language skills for their children than puzzle-solving activities (Gee, 1992). Moreover, book reading activities tend to be ritual-like in their recurrence, having an established position in the daily pattern of family life (Gee, 1992). Shared book reading is a social activity that provides an intensively focused context for children to interact with adults and texts. It also provides opportunities for adults to model and mediate children's language learning. Therefore, studies of shared book reading are important for examining and facilitating children's language development based on Vygotskian theory.

#### *Zone of Proximal Development*

Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), the distance between the actual development level and the level of potential development, was, when introduced in 1978, a fundamentally new approach to the problem that learning should be matched in some manner with the child's level of development and thus illustrated the importance of mediation in a child's learning. In his model, the actual developmental level was determined by independent problem solving and the

potential level was determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with a more capable peer (Vygotsky, 1978). In other words, a child can perform a task under adult guidance or with peer collaboration that could not be achieved alone. For example, children can sound out letters on their own, referring to their actual developmental level, but a more difficult skill of sounding out words may require assistance from someone who knows how to do this such as a more capable student or a parent who can read. Vygotsky's work identifies the relationship between development and learning, and the ZPD bridges that gap between what is known and what can be known. Vygotsky claims that learning occurs in this zone (Lloyd & Fernyhough, 1999).

From this perspective, children engage in higher-order thinking when they work collaboratively with adults or more skilled peers, thus surpassing their independent abilities while working alone. According to this theory, children can extend their abilities when they collaborate with an adult or a more capable peer who can convey important cultural symbols, beliefs, and practices (Daiute, 1993). For example, children engage in higher-order thinking during shared book reading with parents when they need to understand parents' or older siblings' speech and answer their questions. Children might not be able to tell the moral value of the story but they might be able to with parents' facilitation. For example, parents read a book about

*Three Little Pigs* and ask the child, “What do you think this story tells us?” The child cannot answer the question by himself or herself, but when parents ask prompted questions, “Which pig do you think we should learn from?” the child says, “The youngest one.” The parents ask, “Why do you think that?” The child says, “Because he works hard and he is not lazy.” The parents say, “Right, he is industrious. So what do you think this story tells us?” The child answers, “We should not be lazy and we should work hard.” In this way, children learn cultural values when reading with adults.

#### *Zone of Proximal Development and Shared Book Reading*

The ZPD has been broadly applied in shared book reading (Ezell & Justice, 2005). Shared book reading offers a variety of opportunities for working within a child’s ZPD. Shared book reading is a vehicle for children to acquire greater knowledge of and proficiency in oral and written language, which constitutes a foundation for formal reading instruction. Such skills may be best learned when the focus is on quality interactions during shared reading by seeking children’s active involvement and by working within a child’s ZPD. For emergent literacy, once a concept is understood and internalized by the child, the adult may introduce a new concept into the learning zone, and in this way, the child’s knowledge grows and develops one step at a time (Ezell & Justice, 2005). For example, when children



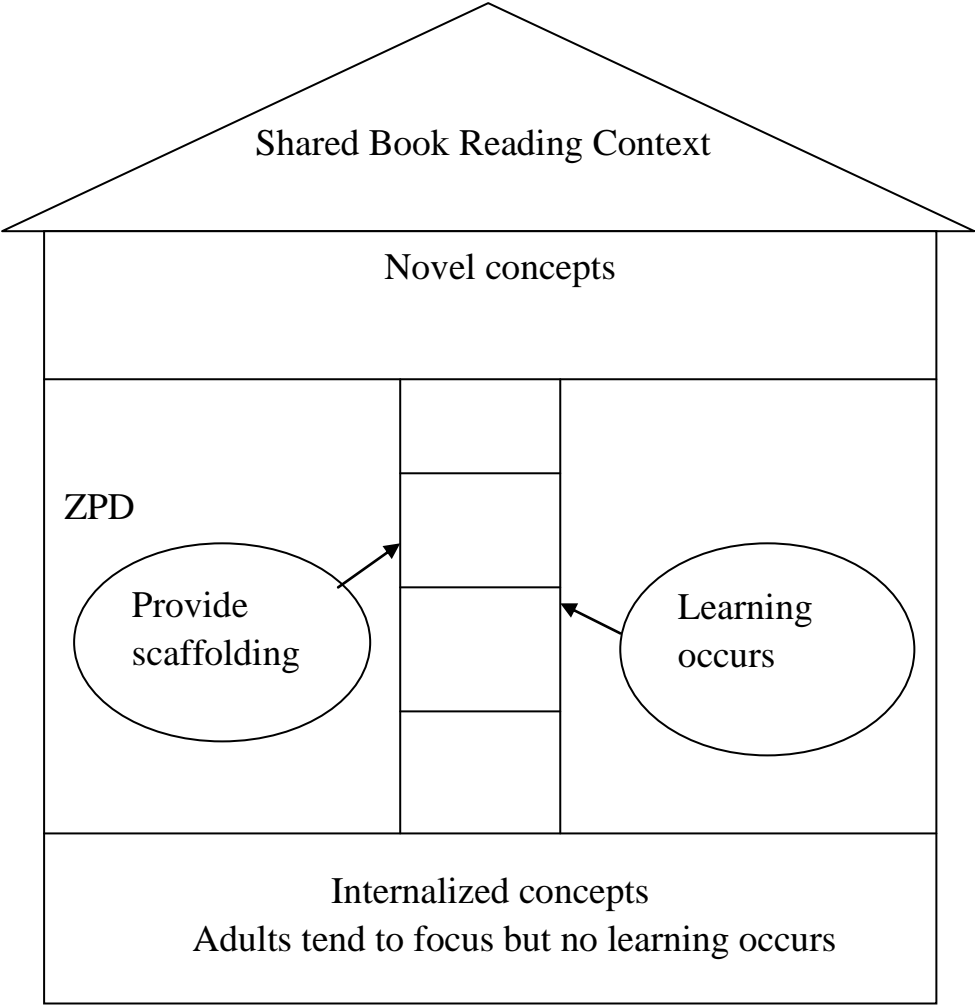
learn the sound of each letter, parents might start to teach their children how to sound out words.

Adults should be aware what children know and what they need to learn. Ezell and Justice (2005) stated that during shared book reading, adults tend to ask questions about what children already know, which are internalized concepts, instead of challenging children with things they do not know, which are novel concepts.

According to the concept of ZPD, adult questions should be within the child's ZPD to facilitate learning. It has been suggested that strategies, such as questioning and retelling, also should be used within children's ZPD to promote language in addition to emergent literacy skills (Ezell & Justice, 2005). A model of supporting children's language during shared book reading is proposed according to the ZPD theory in Figure 1. Imagine there are several floors in a big shared book reading house (i.e., shared book reading context). The first floor contains children's internalized concepts (i.e., what they already know) and the second floor has novel concepts (i.e., what they do not know). The stairs between the first floor and the second floor is the ZPD, the children's learning zone. Adults should help children to climb from one step to another in their learning zone by providing facilitation such as scaffolding. The term scaffolding is used to describe the process through which one provides support to learners so as to enable them to complete a task or activity that is beyond their

independent capabilities. In children's ZPD, adults should provide minimum facilitation to help children complete the task. Once the child is able to complete the task independently, adults should provide advanced tasks and also provide minimum support to help the child. In this way, children are able to keep climbing the stairs and move from one floor to the next one. By providing support in children's learning zone, the adult can gradually transfer some of the book-reading responsibilities to the child so that the child is increasingly able to comprehend more of the text, learn new vocabulary and new language structures and thereby participate equally in the book-reading interaction. Gradual transfer of responsibility from adult to child within a book-reading event is highly consistent with social-interactionist perspectives of development on both theoretical and practical levels (Jamieson, 1994). For example, the first time, parents might read the whole story to their children. The second time, parents might start to ask some questions, for example, "What is he going to do?" to guide their children to tell (or retell) some parts of the story. After retelling the story many times, children might tell (repeat) the story by themselves.

Figure 1.Theoretical Model: ZPD with Shared Book Reading



### *Decontextualized Language and Shared Book Reading*

Decontextualized language refers to concepts and notions removed from the immediate situation and is used to convey information to audiences who share limited information with the speaker or who are removed from the physical context (Morgan & Goldstein, 2004). Other terms used as synonyms for decontextualized language include cognitively challenging language (Massey, Pence, Justice, & Bowels, 2008), inferential language (van Kleeck, Vander Woude, & Hammett, 2006), non-immediate language (Dickinson, De Temple, Hirscheler, & Smith, 1992), and representational language (Sigel, 1986). When adults use contextualized language with young children with limited language abilities they are working under the child's ZPD. In order to challenge the child, they may need to use decontextualized language. Using decontextualized language and asking decontextualized questions may provide contexts for children to move forward and learn new concepts. By using decontextualized language, adults are facilitating children in their ZPD where children's learning occurs. Zuker, Justice, Piasta, & Kaderavek (2010) suggest that children need to use their inferential language skills to understand inferential or abstract information.

Foremost among the text-level skills important to later reading comprehension is the ability to engage in inferencing (e.g., Cain, Oakhill, & Elbro, 2003; Gernsbacher,

1997; Kintsch & Kintsch, 2005; Trabasso & Wiley, 2005; van den Broek et al., 2005; Zwaan & Singer, 2003). Decontextualized language is involved in many forms of classroom discourse and some have asserted it is critical to successful literacy development (Dickinson & Snow, 1987; Dickinson & Tabors, 1991; Norris & Bruning, 1988; Snow, 1983).

Decontextualized language has been found to be important for children's reading and listening comprehension abilities (Zucker et al., 2010). Decontextualized language has also been suggested to be used for improving vocabulary. Children often may need help discerning the meaning of the more rare vocabulary in books. Merely hearing the word read aloud can begin to increase children's vocabulary breadth, but vocabulary depth is enhanced by asking questions that require children to infer word meanings from the context, and providing "think alouds" that demonstrate for them how to engage in such inferencing when they are unable to do so themselves (van Kleeck, 2008). For this reason, it is recommended that some inferential questions embedded in stories for children focus on vocabulary (van Kleeck, Woude, & Hammett, 2006).

Decontextualized language requires children to use their language skills of inferencing and analyzing to infer or abstract information. For example, a teacher asks a child to predict the consequence of an action in the story (e.g., What do you think

will happen next?) (Zucker et al., 2010). Researchers have indicated that preschoolers benefit from adult use of decontextualized questions that require inferencing, prediction, reasoning, or explanation (Snow, 1983; van Kleeck, 2003). Researchers have found that shared book reading provides an optimal setting for engaging preschoolers in decontextualized conversation (Gest, Holland-Coviello, Welsh, Eicher-Catt, & Gill, 2006; Massey et al., 2008).

Roser and Martinez (1985) found that children and adults tend to engage in similar types of talk while reading storybooks together. When adults talked about pictures and meanings of words while reading, children tended to participate in the same manner. When adults made predictions and drew inferences about the text, children attempted to do the same (Torrance & Olson, 1985). Children have a strong tendency to match the level of discussion they hear during book sharing, it follows that the more decontextualized language they hear and are encouraged to respond to, the more practice they will get using it themselves (van Kleeck, 2008).

For preschoolers, inferencing is an integral part of abstracting the causal structure of the text that constitutes what are frequently called story grammar elements (e.g., setting, initiating event, attempts, internal response, and solution). Adults can assist preschoolers' story comprehension by focusing their questions "on events that are more important for establishing the causal structure of the text"

(Kendeou et al., 2005, p. 96), thereby prompting them “to think about the causal links” in stories (Makdissi & Boisclair, 2006, p. 182). The decontextualized talk of mothers’ from low income homes while reading to their preschool children was found to predict their child’s performance in vocabulary, emergent literacy, and print-related skills (De Temple & Snow, 1992).

### *Sociocultural Perspective and Shared Book Reading*

Based on Vygotsky’s work, Rogoff (1990) argues that human development can only be understood in light of the cultural practices and circumstances of their community. Culture and individuals are constantly influencing each other; people contribute to the formation of the culture, and culture contributes to the formation of people (Rogoff, 1990). Sociocultural approaches are based on the concept that human activities take place in cultural contexts, are mediated by language and other symbol systems, and can be best understood when investigated in their historical context (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). From a sociocultural perspective, separating the individual from social influences is not possible. The sociocultural contexts in which teaching and learning occur are considered critical to learning itself, and learning is viewed as culturally and contextually specific (Daniels, 2005).

Rogoff (1990) states that the routine arrangements and interactions between children and their caregivers provide children with thousands of opportunities to

observe and participate in the skilled activities of their culture; ritualized book-reading is such an example. Through repeated and varied experiences in supported routine and challenging situations, children become skilled practitioners in the specific cognitive activities in their communities (Rogoff, 1990). With respect to Chinese culture, one example is that many Chinese parents read stories about the origins and customs of the Chinese New Year. During book reading, parents talk about things to do during the Chinese New Year, such as giving red envelopes to children and worshipping ancestors. In this way, through shared book reading, children learn what to do and how to behave during the Chinese New Year.

From a sociocultural perspective, children from different cultures develop language differently because learning is contextual and cultural specific. Notably, arrangements for and communication with children vary across different cultures (Kim, 1998). In many cultures, shared book reading is a common activity in the home, which provides opportunities for children to interact with their caregivers. Parents from different cultures might provide different contexts. For example, they might ask different questions and make different comments during shared book reading with their children. Specifically, parents from Japan have been found to read more folklore and value more morality-focused stories compared to American parents (Kato-Otani, 2003). Also, Korean parents introduce the writing system earlier than



American parents and order worksheets for their children to practice writing when they are three years of age (Lee, 2002). Further, Korean parents might focus on teaching their children how to write while reading to their children (Park, 2008). These examples illustrate the role of culture in shared book reading.

Cultural development may allow a child to achieve mastery not only of cultural experience, but of the habits and forms of cultural behavior (Vygotsky, 1978). From this viewpoint, the ZPD must be viewed as a more general mechanism where culture and cognition influence each other (Cole, 1985). Therefore, variations in social interactions may be expected to yield adaptations to their specific cultural surroundings in this sensitive zone (Kim, 1998). Examining parental shared book reading from different cultures is necessary for understanding and facilitating language development of children from different cultures, such as Chinese and European American cultures.

*Parental, Preschool Teachers', and SLPs' Emergent Literacy Practices in the*

*European-American Culture*

*Parental Emergent Literacy Practices in the European-American Culture*

A number of studies have explored European-American parental emergent literacy practices (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Hood, Conlon, & Andrews, 2008). Particularly, the age of onset of book reading, the frequency of book reading,

and book genres have been studied because these elements have been suggested to be related to children's language ability, emergent literacy skills, later reading ability, and parents' reading styles (Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell, 1994; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002). Previous studies showed that children whose parents report reading to them from an early age tend to have higher scores on language measures (DeBaryshe, 1993; Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell, 1994). European American parents begin reading to their children at their early age. Burgess et al.(2002) studied the relation of the home emergent literacy environment to the development of reading. The parents of 115 predominately Caucasian and middle class children aged 4 and 5 reported that they start reading to their children, on average, at the age of 7.32 months old, with a range of 1 to 18 months old. Phillips and Lonigan (2009) reported that parents start to read to their children at an average age of 6 months old.

Regarding frequency of book reading, Scarborough, Dobrich, and Hager (1991) found that preschoolers who were read to more and who participated in more solitary book activities at home became better readers by second grade compared to preschoolers with less frequent early literacy home experiences. Dobrich (1994) and Bus, van Uzendoorn, and Pellegrini (1995) found a relationship between reported frequency of joint book reading and a variety of literacy and language achievement measures, accounting for approximately 8% of the variance. Book reading is a

common emergent literacy activity conducted frequently in American homes. In Foy and Mann's (2003) study, the parents of forty monolingual and mostly Caucasian children aged from 4 years to 6 years and 2 months from middle class neighborhoods reported the frequency of reading to their children. The results indicated that they read at bedtime 4.17 times per week and at other times 3.53 times per week. Hood, Conlon, and Andrews (2008) studied the home emergent literacy environments of 143 preschool children, mostly Caucasians with some Asian and indigenous participants (mean age of 5.36 years old) from low to middle class families. All parents reported reading to their children at least once per week, with 58.4% reading once or more per day. In another study, Phillips and Lonigan (2009) examined the variations of preschoolers' home emergent literacy environment. Children ranging in age from 2 to 5 years at the time of initial recruitment attended a wide variety of preschool center settings, including private centers, church-based programs, Head Start, and subsidized child care. The ethnic backgrounds of the children included approximately 58% Caucasian; 39% African American, and 3% other backgrounds, including Hispanic, Asian, and Native American. The caregivers in this study had more than a high school education and had household incomes that ranged from below \$10,000 to more than \$250,000 per year. The researchers found that primary caregivers read to their children 4.69 times per week. Taken together, these studies indicated that book

reading is a common emergent literacy activity in European American families across socio-economic status. However, parents from low to middle SES families reported reading to their children at least once a week and parents from middle to high SES families reported reading to their children about 4 times a week.

Book genre also has been suggested an important factor of parental book reading styles (Anderson, Anderson, Lynch, & Shapiro, 2004). Parents use different terms and lead different discussions when sharing different types of books (Torr & Clugston, 1999). Knowing the types of books parents read and the language used during shared book reading would be informative.

In sum, these studies show that American parents from middle class backgrounds and a variety of ethnicities, though predominately Caucasian, read to their children before age one. The characteristics of the latter studies are listed in table 1.

Table 1. American Parents' Emergent Literacy Practices

study	Foy and Mann (2003)	Hood, Conlon, and Andrews (2008)	Phillips and Lonigan (2009)	Burgess, Hecht, and Lonigan (2002)
# of participants	40	143	1044	155
Age of children (Mean age)	Age for 4y to 6y (M= 58.32 months)	(M=64.32 months)	Age from 2 to 5 years (M=49.32months)	Age from 4y to 5y (M= 60.4 months)
SES	Middle class	Low to middle class	Low -upper range	Middle class
Ethnicity	Mostly Caucasian	mostly Caucasians with some Asian and indigenous participants	58% Caucasian; 39% African American; and 3% other backgrounds, including Hispanic, Asian, and Native	Caucasian
Age of starting to read to children			6 months old	7.32 months old
Frequency of book reading	read at bedtime 4.17 times per week and at other times 3.53 times per week	reading to their children at least once per week, with 58.4% reading once or more per day	read to their children 4.69 times per week	

### *Effect of Socio-economic Status and Maternal Education on Emergent Literacy*

General demographic variables such as socio-economic status were also suggested as strong predictors of children's language and literacy achievement (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994). Maternal education has been associated with more frequent book reading (Lyytinen, Laasko, & Poikkeus, 1998; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994). Number of books children owned was found fewer in low SES homes compared to middle SES family (Feitelson & Goldstein, 1986). Moreover, it was found that parents from low SES homes conducted shared book reading less frequently compared to parent from middle SES groups (Heale, 1983; Teale, 1986). Researchers have also studied mothers from different SES groups reading with their young children (Hammer, 2001; Ninio, 1980; Peralta de Mendoza, 1995). They found that mothers from higher SES backgrounds used more elaborate and more varied language during reading compared to mothers from lower SES homes (Ninio, 1980; Peralta de Mendoza, 1995). These studies showed that mothers with different education and different SES backgrounds might have different shared book reading practices and have different talking styles during shared book reading.

### *Preschool Teachers' Emergent Literacy Practices in the European-American Culture*

Some studies have explored the characteristics of teachers' shared book reading practices such as frequency of book reading, duration of book reading, and the types

of books they read in their classrooms with children. In one study, preschool children's activities during the day were observed through multiple visits in their classrooms. The results showed that preschool teachers spent 5% of the time during the day reading to children (Early, Ikura, Ritchie, Barbarin, Winn, Crawford, Frome, Clifford, Burchinal, Howes, Bryany, & Pianta, 2010). Hindman, Connor, Jewkes, and Morrison (2008) found that at preschool, the mean length of teachers' book reading was ranged from 3.51 to 14.69 minutes for mostly narrative books. The duration of teachers' book reading might be impacted by the types of books they read. Price, Bradley, and Smith (2012) found that the information book reading session was longer (i.e., ranged from 7.93 to 27.50 minutes) compared to the storybook reading session (i.e., ranged from 4.22 to 21.58 minutes). Some studies have shown that preschool teachers might read more narrative books than information book with children. In Hindman et al., (2008), teachers generally chose narrative books with only one teacher reading an informational text linked to a transportation unit. Similarly, Pentimonti, Zucker, and Justice (2011) examined the types of book reading preschool teachers read with children and found that 86% of the books were narrative texts and 5% were information texts.

Researchers have also studied how teachers use shared book reading to facilitate preschoolers' language in European-American preschool classrooms. In Pentimonti

and Justice (2010), five Head Start Caucasian preschool teachers' read aloud sessions were examined to explore their use of scaffolding strategies during book reading.

Teachers' experience in a preschool setting ranged from nine to 17 years. Four of the teachers held a 2 year Associate's degree, whereas the fifth teacher had a Bachelor's degree. A majority (58%) of children's families had annual incomes of less than \$20,000. The results showed that the majority of strategies used by teachers (96%) were low-support scaffolding strategies as compared to high-support strategies.

High-support strategies are more structured and used when a child needs more assistance. In contrast, low-support strategies require children to make prediction and inferences. Teachers made an average of 27 low-support strategies per read aloud session, 45% involved generalizing, 43% involved reasoning, and 12% involved predicting. This type of low-support strategy is an example of encouraging decontextualized, inferential language from preschool children. Teachers employed very little use of high-support scaffolding strategies (4%). They used an average of one high-support scaffolding strategy per read aloud session. Of high support strategies that were used, most involved co-participating, one involved reducing choices, and none involved eliciting.

Preschool teachers' literal language and inferential language during shared book reading also have been studied by researchers (Massey, Pence, Justice, & Bowles,



2008; Zucker et al., 2010). The distinction between literal and inferential language skills involves considering the level of cognitive demand. A linguistic interaction places the cognitive demand on the child. When children interact with others, they use different levels of language skills in the contexts. The level of cognitive demand differs based on the language skills children use within the context (Chapman, 2000). Literal language requires children to discuss, describe, and/or respond to information they can readily perceive, as occurs when a teacher asks a child to label an object depicted on the cover of a book (e.g., “What’s that?”). In contrast, inferential language requires children to use their language skills to infer or abstract information by inferencing or analyzing, as occurs when a teacher asks a child to predict what a book might be about (e.g., What do you think will happen in this story?). When reading narrative texts, the majority of conversations tend to focus on literal, rather than inferential topics. When conducting shared book reading with preschoolers, data indicate teachers’ and parents’ literal extratextual talk typically varies from 63% (van Kleeck, Gillam, Hamilton, & McGrath, 1997) to 76% (Danis, Bernard, & Leproux, 2000). In contrast, teachers’ and parents’ inferential extratextual talk tends to range from 23% (Danis et al., 2000; Dickinson et al., 1992) to 37% (van Kleeck, et al., 1997). Blank et al., (1978) provided a guideline that preschool teachers should focus roughly 70% of conversation at literal levels to provide children substantial

opportunities to successfully use language and about 30% at inferential level to promote children's growth in inferential language skills.

During shared reading specifically, Zucker et al., (2010) examined the extent to which preschool teachers used literal and inferential questions. The results showed that in total, 57.2% of teachers' questions were at inferential levels and 42.8% were at literal levels. In an average shared reading session, teachers used more inferential questions than literal questions.

There is also some evidence that preschool teachers who are trained to use dialogic reading (DR) (Whitehurst et al., 1988) in preschool classrooms have children who have better reading and language outcomes (Lever & Senechal, 2011). DR is a recommended intervention which consists of teaching parents strategies to support children's acquisition of the story vocabulary and discussion of the story plot (Reese, Parks, & Leyva, 2010). The strategies included wh- and open-ended questions and imitation techniques to elicit the children's production of targeted lexical forms and specific sentence constructions. Teachers trained in DR changed their interactions with children during shared book reading dramatically. The behavior that increased the most was the frequency with which teachers used WH-questions (what, who, why) during book reading. It has also been reported that children exposed to DR learn more

spoken vocabulary than children exposed to regular reading (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000).

### *Effect of Teacher's Education Level on Shared Book Reading Practices*

Teachers' emergent literacy practices might be influenced by their educational levels and years of working experiences. Previous studies have examined whether teacher qualifications significantly affect the quality of care and education provided to young children (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001; Lazar, Darlington, Murray, Royce, & Snipper, 1982; Oden, Schweinhart, & Weikart, 2000; Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney, & Abbott-Shim, 2000; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1999; Whitebook, Sakai, Gerber, & Howes, 2001) and if higher teacher qualifications contribute to more positive short- and long-term outcomes for children (Kontos & Wilcox-Herzog, 1997, 2001). McMullen and Alat (2002) examined the relationship between educational background and the philosophical orientation of early childhood educators who worked as caregivers and teachers of preschoolers who had worked in the field for an average of 8.34 years. The results showed that professionals with a bachelor's degree or higher more strongly adopted developmentally appropriate practices as a philosophy overall than colleagues with less education. Also, teachers' educational level has been suggested as influencing teachers' use of strategies during shared book reading. Preschool teachers with a bachelor's degree or higher tend to provide better

quality preschool experiences (Barnett, 2004; Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001; Whitebook, 2003). Teachers with higher educational levels are more likely to engage children in planned and creative activities, and they are more responsive to young children compared to preschool teachers with less education (Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips, 1992). Teachers' educational level might impact their interactions with children during shared book reading as well. Gerde and Powell (2009) found that teachers with higher educational levels used more book-related utterances and less behavior-related talk utterances compared to teachers with lower educational level. They found that teachers with associate's and bachelor's degrees in early childhood education rather than other fields used greater amounts of book-related talk during storybook reading. Together, these studies provide preliminary data that teachers with different educational levels might use different strategies and different talking styles during shared book reading.

#### *SLPs' Emergent Literacy Practices in the United States*

Two surveys by McFadden and Trujillo (1999) and Ezell (2000) have shown that shared book reading is a favored activity by speech-language pathologists due to the flexibility of this approach. However, how frequently, and for how long SLPs conduct their shared book reading intervention as well as the types of books they select have not been addressed in previous studies. Findings from research studies support the

effectiveness of shared reading for increasing vocabulary development (Coyne, Simmons, Kame'enui, & Stoolmiller, 2004; Sharif, Riber, & Ozuah, 2002), general linguistic performance (Crain-Thoreson & Dale, 1999), and emergent literacy knowledge (Justice & Ezell, 2002; Justice, Pullen, & Pence, 2008). These positive effects upon language and emergent literacy skills make it a popular language intervention context with SLPs. The appeal of shared book reading has been enhanced as the field of speech-language pathology increasingly focuses on emergent literacy within an educational framework that adopts the view that early language intervention increases the likelihood of later school success (Diehl & Vaughn, 2010).

Shared book reading interventions have three common elements. First, the adult asks the child questions about book content. Second, the child answers the questions. Third, the adult provides feedback, typically in the form of an imitation, expansion, comments, or follow-up questions (Pile, Girolametto, Johnson, Chen, & Cleave, 2010). Fey, Catts, and Larrivee (1995) reviewed five studies reporting the success of adult-child storybook reading in increasing the oral language performance of typically developing children and children with language impairment. The adults in these studies were taught to use a number of reading strategies and techniques commonly found to facilitate interactions between caregivers and their typically developing children. These included establishing joint focus, engaging the child in the story

construction, and providing feedback such as requesting clarification or recasting the child's utterances. Using the latter techniques resulted in child changes in sentence forms and expressive vocabularies.

Several versions of shared book reading for language intervention (Crowe, Norris, & Hoffman 2004; Whitehurst et al., 1988; Yoder, Spruytenburg, Edwards, & Davies, 1995) were introduced and studied in previous research. DR (Whitehurst et al., 1988) is one method that has been recommended in previous studies. The intervention consists of teaching parents strategies to support children's acquisition of the story vocabulary and discussion of the story plot (Reese, Parks, & Leyva, 2010). DR strategies included wh- and open-ended questions and imitation techniques to elicit the children's production of targeted lexical forms and specific sentence constructions during reading. Crain-Thoreson and Dale (1999) found the positive effectiveness of the DR strategies on children's verbal participation during shared book reading.

Another language intervention using shared book reading that has been proposed by Crowe, Norris, and Hoffman (2000), is a responsive interactive reading procedure called Complete Reading Cycle (CRC). The CRC consisted of four steps: (a) establishing joint focus, (b) eliciting a response, (c) providing a response, and (d) giving feedback (i.e., acknowledging, correcting, or elaborating on the response).

Adults were encouraged to comment, as well as question, and assume initiator and

responder roles. Questions including requests for labels (e.g., What's that? ) or actions (e.g., What's he doing? or What's happening here). Cloze procedure (e.g., He's eating \_\_\_\_\_.) and binary choice (e.g., Should he walk or run?) were suggested in CRC.

Crowe, Norris, and Hoffman (2004) supported the effect of the CRC on children with language impairment, specifically on their communicative turns taken, number of different words used, and total number of words produced during joint book reading.

Researchers also studied strategies that improve children's language during shared book reading. Yoder, Spruytenburg, Edwards, and Davies (1995) studied how verbal routines and expansions increase generalized child mean length of utterance (MLU). Expansions are adult utterances that follow the child's utterance, refer to the central events and relationships of the child's utterance, and increase the syntactic or semantic complexity of the message (Nelson, 1989). Expansions have been found to be effective in facilitating syntactic development in children who are developing typically (Nelson, Carskadden, & Bonvillain, 1973; Nelson, 1977) and who have severe developmental disorders (Scherer & Olswang, 1989). In Yoder et al., (1995), an intervention including two components was conducted. First, repeated exposure to the same book was used to help the child develop a verbal routine. The second component of the intervention was to ask the child questions about the pictures on the page, pause for the child's response, and expand the child's nonimitative utterances.

The purpose of asking questions was to elicit from the child verbal engagement about the book's pictures and story so that the child's utterances could be expanded. The purpose of pausing after a question was to allow the child time to respond. The results showed that the intervention increased generalized MLU in children.

Activities related to shared book reading are also recommended by researchers (Ezell & Justice, 2005). After shared book reading, discussing story content as a group and retelling the story after reading, role playing, connecting text to personal experiences, and art activities were suggested (Gunning, 2008; Morrow, 1993). During and after shared book reading, webbing and mapping, graphic presentations for categorizing and structuring information were recommended to facilitate children's vocabulary, phonological skills, and comprehension (van Kleeck, 2006).

*Parental, Preschool Teachers', and SLPs' Emergent Literacy Practices  
in Chinese Culture*

*Parental Emergent Literacy Practices in Chinese Culture*

There have only been a limited number of studies that have been undertaken with individuals who live in Taiwan concerning the topic of emergent literacy. Because of this, studies conducted in not only Taiwan, but also China and Hong Kong are included in this section. Hong Kong and China are geographically close to Taiwan. All three share the same official language, Mandarin Chinese, and are culturally



influenced by Chinese culture and Confucian tradition. Therefore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China share some similar culture. However, each also has their own individual cultures. Wu (2007) examined the reading beliefs of Taiwanese mothers of 3 to 4 year olds. Most of these mothers (72%) had at least a 2 or 3 year community college degree. She reported that 59% of mothers read to their preschool children during bedtime. Zhou and Salili (2008) reported that a majority of Chinese parents (78%) who had a college education read to their child prior to their entering school. In Wu and Honig (2010), mothers of 731 preschoolers aged from 3 to 5 in Taiwan reported their emergent literacy practices and beliefs about reading aloud to children. The mothers were well-educated, with 55% having at least a college degree and 39% a high school education. The results showed that 25% of the mothers reported rarely or never reading to their child at bedtime, 42% reading one to two times a week, 24% reported reading four to five times a week and 8% reported reading daily. When reporting the frequency of reading to children during the daytime, 29% of mothers indicated that they never or rarely read, 46% reported one to two times a week, 19% reported four to five times a week and 3% read daily.

In Li and Rao's (2000) study, parents of 480 preschoolers aged from 2 to 6 in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Singapore reported their emergent literacy practices and beliefs about language learning. The subjects involved children randomly selected

from middle class kindergartens. They found that most of the parents from the middle class or who had high educational levels (i.e., at least a college degree) read to their children at home and estimated that the typical duration of each reading session was 15 to 30 minutes.

Emergent literacy activities other than book reading are also conducted by Chinese and Taiwanese parents. In Li and Rao (2000), parents in Hong Kong (73%) and Beijing (67%) taught their children from 2 to 6 years old to read Chinese characters at home. The summary of Chinese parents' emergent literacy practices is listed in table 2.

Table 2. Chinese Parents' Emergent Literacy Practices

	Taiwan	HK	China
Age of starting being read to	59% of the mothers read to preschool children		78% read to their child prior to their entering school
Frequency of book reading	65% of the mothers read multiple times a week		
Duration of book reading		15-30 min	15-30 min
Other literacy practices		73% teach Chinese characters	67% Teach Chinese characters 90.5% in Hsu (2001) encouraged children to read street signs once a week

*Immigrant Chinese Parents' Emergent Literacy Practices in the United States*

Studies that addressed immigrant Chinese's home emergent literacy environment are discussed in this section. Cheng (2003) examined parental emergent literacy practices in 5 Chinese immigrant families with children aged from 3 to 5 in the U.S. Eight of the 10 parents in Cheng (2003) had at least a college degree and the other 2 had completed high school. These parents reported that they frequently conducted bedtime reading with their children. In another study, Hsu (2001) examined the literacy practices in first generation Chinese families with children aged 3 to 9 in the U.S. The majority of participants in this study had at least an undergraduate college degree and 19.8% of them specified that they had a Ph.D. degree. Many parents reported that they encouraged the older siblings to read to their younger siblings twice or three times a week. They also reported that they read Chinese storybooks together with their children once a month, and that they read English storybooks twice or three times a week. Regarding emergent literacy activities other than shared book reading, Cheng (2003) found that in 3 of the 5 families, children were sent to a Chinese language school and were taught to read some basic Chinese characters and were also supervised while doing Chinese homework. The parents assisted their children to some extent in reviewing the content of school learning by supervising the completion of their homework and by providing extra homework. Chinese parents

also introduced words written in places outside of the home. The majority of parents (90.5%) in Hsu (2001) encouraged children to read street signs once a week. Hsu (2001) reported that the least frequently conducted reading activity was reading Chinese newspapers together, which occurred less than once a month. These results showed that shared book reading is a common emergent literacy activity in Chinese families in the United States. Also, immigrant Chinese parents tended to teach their children Chinese characters at home.

#### *Decontextualized Language During Shared Book Reading with Mothers*

Decontextualized language has also been acknowledged as an important aspect of shared book reading. Chang and Lin (2006) studied shared book reading interactions between 16 Taiwanese mothers and their 3 year olds from low-income families. Only one of the 16 mothers had a college education. The other 15 mothers had high school education levels. The mothers produced more contextualized language than decontextualized language. Regarding questions the mothers asked during shared book reading, the mothers used more contextualized questions (mean utterances = 39.31) than decontextualized questions (mean utterances = 9.88). They also analyzed children's utterances and found a positive relationship between the number of mothers' type of talk and children's talk. When the mothers used more contextualized talk, the children used more contextualized talk. When the mothers

used more decontextualized talk, the children used more decontextualized talk. This study showed that similar to children in European-American culture, Taiwanese children have a tendency to match the level of discussion they hear during book sharing. More decontextualized questions during shared book reading will give Taiwanese children more opportunities to practice using decontextualized language.

### *Preschool Teachers' Emergent Literacy Practices in Chinese Culture*

#### *Expectations for preschoolers in Taiwan*

According to preschool education law, there are six teaching areas in preschools/kindergartens including health, play, music, language, common knowledge, and task completing. The Hsin-Yi Foundation (1987) reported that 89% of the preschools/kindergartens included 1<sup>st</sup> grade reading and writing materials in their teaching lessons. This is surprising, given that according to education law, writing is not supposed to be included in preschools/kindergartens teaching lessons. Many preschools/kindergartens teach preschoolers how to write because of parental expectations (Liu, 2006). Lu, Tsai, Jiang, and Shiao (1995) found that 77.4% of the preschools/kindergartens in Taiwan used worksheets to train preschoolers' reading and writing abilities. According to the Ministry of Education reports in 2002, usage of worksheets in both public and private preschools/kindergartens is common for teaching preschoolers reading and writing. In private preschools/kindergartens,

teaching writing and reading is more popular than in public ones. The ratio of preschoolers who enrolled in private preschools/kindergartens to public ones is 3 to 1 (Ministry of Education, 2002). These data might indicate that parents expect their children to learn reading and writing in preschool years (Liu, 2006). Second language learning is not included in preschool teaching areas according to education law. However, currently, English learning is common in preschools/kindergartens in Taiwan. Lin (2002) examined 288 private preschools/kindergartens in Taipei city and found that 97% of the private preschools/kindergartens conducted English teaching. Among these preschools/kindergartens, 14.56% of them conducted bilingual (i.e., teachers speak English and Chinese) teaching and 2.91% conducted English only (i.e., teachers only speak English) teaching. Chang, Chang, and Lin (2002) surveyed 303 preschools/kindergartens in Taiwan and found that one third of the public preschools/kindergartens and most of the private preschools/kindergartens (97.2%) conducted English teaching. These findings showed that English learning is an expectation for preschoolers in Taiwan.

#### *Preschools/kindergartens in Taiwan*

In Taiwan, day care centers include three different types: day care centers for infants which accept children aged from 0 to 2 years old, preschools/kindergartens which accept children aged from 2 to 6 years old and school-age child care which

accept school-aged children after school. According to the statistic results from the Ministry of the Interior, at the end of June in 2010, there were 3,888 preschools and kindergartens in Taiwan. There were 252,379 preschoolers enrolled in these preschools and kindergartens. Sixty-eight percent of the children aged from 3 to 6 in Taiwan went to preschools and kindergartens and 98% of the children who are older than 5 years old went to schools. At the end of June in 2010, there were 24,132 preschool teachers and assistants and 97.05% were females (Ministry of Interior website, 2011). According to the special education annual report in 2009, there were 11,621 preschoolers who needed special services. Of these children, 69% were male and 30.38% were female. Among these children, 11,405 preschoolers enrolled in regular preschools/kindergartens and 216 preschoolers enrolled in special education schools. Among those 11,405 preschoolers who needed special services and enrolled in regular preschools/kindergartens, 6,581 (57.7%) preschoolers were placed in regular classes; 3,887 (34.08%) preschoolers received special services and counseling from traveling professionals; 785 (6.65%) preschoolers were placed in special education classes; and 179 (1.57%) preschoolers were placed in resource classes. All the preschoolers enrolled in special education schools were placed in special education classes. In recent years, the Taiwanese government has established more preschools/kindergartens for preschoolers so they can go to public

preschools/kindergartens. However, there is still a shortage of public preschools/kindergartens for all the preschoolers. Because of the shortage of public preschools, parents send their children to private preschools/kindergartens although they are more expensive than public preschools (Liu, 2004). According to the Ministry of Education (2009), there were 3,195 preschools/kindergartens and 1,651 of them were private preschools/kindergartens. The total number of preschoolers was 185,668 and 112,339 preschoolers enrolled in private preschools/kindergartens.

#### *Inclusive preschool education in Taiwan*

According to special education law in Taiwan, children aged 3 years old who need special services can enroll in public preschools/kindergartens after applying. In Taiwan, inclusive education was first regulated by the government in Taipei city in 1995. According to the special education policy, children who have special needs cannot be rejected by the preschools/kindergartens because of their special needs. In 1998, public preschools/kindergartens started to conduct inclusive education in Taipei city and accepted children who need special services. Other cities also started to conduct inclusive education (Liu, 2004). According to inclusive education policy, each regular class in all the preschools/kindergartens should receive one to two children with special needs. Preschools/kindergartens cannot reject children with special needs regardless of their type of disability. Each class that receives one child



with special needs can reduce the number of preschoolers in their class by 3 preschoolers. Schools can apply for software and hardware equipment from the government to assist with children's needs. Teachers complete IEPs with professionals for children with special needs to provide appropriate learning environments and plans (special education law). However, many preschools/kindergartens only accept certain types of children with special needs because of the shortages of resources and budgets (Song, 2008).

Several models are used to provide services for children who have special needs in Taiwan (Fu, 2006). These include the consultation model, the team model, the assistant model and the resource classroom model. The consultation model refers to the special education teachers working with typical education teachers. In this model, special education teachers provide indirect services for children with special needs through counseling. Special education teachers and typical education teachers schedule meetings to discuss children's learning goals and materials. Very few preschools/kindergartens in Taiwan use this model (Shi, 2005). The team model refers to special education teachers and typical education teachers collaborating and sharing responsibility for teaching. Special education teachers and typical education teachers teach in the same classroom at the same time and are responsible for different teaching themes and children. This team model is not common in Taiwan because

most of the teachers are used to teaching alone and rarely plan lessons with other teachers (Shi, 2005). The assistant model refers to having an assistant in the classroom to help typical education teachers and special education teachers provide partial assistance. Special education teachers are not able to work with all the children with special services in the preschool/kindergarten, therefore assistants are needed to provide services for children. Since 1999, the Ministry of Education in Taiwan has started to fund preschools/kindergartens for placing assistants in classrooms. However, it is still difficult to arrange enough assistants in preschools/kindergartens in all the cities. Finally, the Resource classroom model refers to working with children with special needs individually in some resource classrooms. Special education teachers work with children with special needs at certain times individually. Other times, children with special needs are placed in regular classrooms. Some of the preschools/kindergartens use this model to provide inclusive education (Fu, 2006).

### *Emergent literacy practices in Chinese Culture*

Several studies have been conducted in Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong to explore the emergent literacy environment and practices in preschools. Tseng (2002) surveyed preschool teachers in 70 of the 146 kindergartens in Taichung City in Taiwan and received 520 surveys. Interviews were also conducted with 10 preschool teachers to examine teachers' emergent literacy practices. A 5-point-scale was used

on the survey questions. A score of a 5 indicated that the teacher always did the item; a 4 indicated that the teacher often did; a 3 indicated the teacher sometimes did; a 2 indicated the teacher rarely did; and a 1 indicated that the teacher never did. The results showed that the teachers selected books according to children's ages (Mean score of 4.43), teaching content (mean score was 4.41), and positive and active character attributes (Mean score was 4.38). Regarding teaching strategies, teachers provided opportunities for children to read (Mean score =4.51), praised and encouraged when children to read books appropriately (Mean score =4.5) and related texts to children's real experiences (Mean score =4.37). With respect to arranging the reading environment, teachers provided book shelves that were easy for children to access books (Mean score =4.66); located books that had been shared in the class at the reading corner so children could read them repetitively (Mean score =4.6), and made sure every child could see the book by arranging their seats (Mean score = 4.51). Regarding planning activities, teachers encouraged children to express their thoughts and feelings about books (Mean score = 4.35), to retell the book (Mean score =4.22), and to discuss the content of the book (Mean score =4.22).

Another study conducted in Taiwan also addressed kindergarten and preschool teachers' beliefs about emergent literacy and the emergent literacy environment in kindergarten and preschools (Huang, 2002). One hundred and twenty surveys were

sent to 26 kindergartens and 34 preschools and 107 surveys were returned. The results showed that most of the teachers believed that the advantages of reading to children included improving language abilities (95.1%), developing creativity and imagination (81.4%), and fostering reading habits (80.4%). Fewer, but still a large number of teachers, believed that improving parent-child relationships (68.6%) and providing opportunities of self learning (56.9%) were advantages of reading to children.

Regarding emergent literacy environments, the results showed that the amount of children's books owned by the kindergarten and preschool varied. The schools reported that 10.8% had fewer than 300 books, 21.6% of the schools reported that they had 301 to 600 books, 10.8% reported 601 to 800 books, 10.8% reported 801 to 1000 books, 14.7% reported 1001 to 1500 book, 5.9% reported 1501 to 2000, and 25.5% reported above 2001 books. This result indicated that 46.1% of the kindergartens and preschools owned more than 1000 children's books. Teachers also reported the types of books they owned. The following were the most to the least books they owned: picture books, animal stories, scientific books, rhyming books, historical books, art books, myth stories, children's poems, adventure stories, comic books, joke books, and horror stories. The factors teachers considered when selecting books included developmental appropriateness (88.2%), expanding life experiences (76.5%), relations to lesson themes (69.6%), and children's interests (67.6%). These

two studies showed that book reading was commonly used in kindergartens and preschools in Taiwan.

The emergent literacy environment and practice in preschools also have been studied in Hong Kong and China. Li and Rao (2005) examined curricular and instructional influences on early Chinese emergent literacy attainment in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Participants included 240 children, their parents, and preschool teachers. All preschools consisted of children from middle-class backgrounds. In this study, the Classroom Literacy Environment Index (CLEI) was used to tap teachers' beliefs and practices related to Chinese emergent literacy education, classroom literacy resources, reading strategies and teacher-child interactions. Regarding the emergent literacy environment in preschools, the results showed that in Beijing (BJ), 81.8% of the teachers reported that they had more than 30 Chinese books available for children, whereas all the teachers in Hong Kong (HK) said they had no more than 29 Chinese books (BJ: 53% more than 50 copies, 28.8% 30-50 copies; HK: 96.8% 15-29 copies). Most teachers in Beijing (87.9%) changed books on the bookshelf once a month, whereas the majority of teachers in Hong Kong (74.2%) did it biannually or annually. Regarding teachers' emergent literacy practices, almost all the teachers in Hong Kong (98.4%) and only a third in Beijing (34.8%) reported that they provided instruction in reading Chinese characters to children under

five years of age. All teachers in Hong Kong taught four year olds how to write Chinese characters, whereas none of the teachers in Beijing reported doing so. The majority of teachers in Hong Kong (83.9%) and Beijing (69.7%) set a definite time for reading Chinese stories to their children. All teachers in Hong Kong reported that each reading session lasted less than 15 minutes, whereas 45.5% of the teachers in Beijing reported spending around 15-30 minutes reading to children every day (BJ: 45.5% 15-30 minutes, 54.5% less than 15 minutes). The results from classroom observations showed that children in Hong Kong were exposed to teacher-directed and explicit instruction. Teachers typically taught children to recognize Chinese characters and practice writing the characters which they had just learned. The children were asked to read the characters repeatedly, with the whole-class reading and alternating with individual turns. The reading was followed by a 15 minute period for writing the new characters they had just learned in the group session. In Beijing, teachers asked the children to point to the characters as they said the words. The summary of Chinese preschool teachers' emergent literacy practices is listed in table 3.

Table 3. Chinese Preschool Teachers' Emergent Literacy Practices

	Taiwan	HK	Beijing
	Shared book reading is commonly used		
#of children's books	46.1% owned more than 1000 books	96.8% owned 15-29 books	81.8% owned more than 30

		books
Duration of book reading section	100% less than 15 minutes	45.5% spending around 15-30 minutes
Strategies	<p>(1) Providing opportunities for children to read</p> <p>(2) providing praise/encouragement when children read books appropriately</p> <p>(3) relating texts to children's experiences</p>	
Activities	<p>encourage children expressing their thoughts and feelings about books, to retell the story, and to discuss the content of the book</p>	
Beliefs	<p>advantages of reading to children: improving language abilities (95.1%), develop creativity and imagination (81.4%), and foster reading habits (80.4%), improving parent-child relationships (68.6%), providing opportunities of self learning (56.9%).</p>	

One area of emergent literacy that has not received attention in the literature is shared book reading. In particular, teachers' talking during shared book reading has not been examined. The information about how preschool teachers read books to children is not known including their use of contextualized and decontextualized language. These two types of language are important to preschoolers' language and literacy development (Cain, Oakhill, & Elbro, 2003; Gernsbacher, 1997; van Kleeck, 2008).

#### *SLPs' Emergent Literacy Practices in Chinese Culture*

##### *Speech-Language pathologists in Taiwan*

According to data in 2000 from the Speech-Language-Hearing Association of Taiwan, most of the SLPs worked in hospitals and medical systems. There were only 4 (1.08%) SLPs working in school systems; and there were 3 (0.81%) SLPs working on special education teams (Wang, 2001). Wang, Tseng, and Sheng (2008) surveyed 223 SLPs and found that 71.2% of the SLPs worked in the department of rehabilitation in hospitals. On average, a speech-language pathologist had 12.54 clients referred from medical professionals per week and 9.67 clients who sought services spontaneously per week. Regarding the type of disorder displayed by their clients, the five most common types were: (1) developmental language delay, (2) articulation disorders, (3) autism, (4) swallowing disorders, and (5) aphasia. The most



common age of clients ranged from 3 to 6 years old. In July 2008, the law of SLPs was announced. The national certification exam of SLPs was implemented in 2009. According to the Ministry of Examination, from 2009 to 2010, the number of qualified SLPs was 635. In March 2011, the number of members in the Speech, Language, and Hearing Association of Taiwan was 1,313 including SLPs, teachers, students in SPLH program and other professionals related to SPLH. According to the Department of Health in Executive Yuan of Taiwan, there were 458 registered SLPs in March, 2011.

Because of the shortages of SLPs working in school systems, most of the preschools/kindergartens do not have an SLP providing services. In some special education schools, full time and/or part time SLPs are available for children. However, the number of SLPs working in special education school systems is still limited due to the shortage of SLPs (Lin, Gan, & Chen, 2006). Some special education schools (38.1%) recruit SLPs by signing contracts with hospitals. Therefore, some SLPs work in the hospitals full time and go to schools to provide services once or twice a week (Sun & Wang, 2004). Lou and Yang (2003) interviewed professionals in 23 public special education schools and asked about their service delivery models. The results showed that of the 8 SLPs interviewed all of them saw the child outside of the classroom when providing services, 88% (7 SLPs) of them also provided consultation

with teachers, and 38% (3 SLPs) of them provided collaborative teaching. Some SLPs provided both individual services and consultation services.

No studies have been conducted that examine SLPs' emergent literacy practices in Chinese culture, including the environment they provided and the activities and strategies they used during shared book reading. The only exception is that parents have been taught the DR technique to improve the receptive vocabulary development of hearing-impaired children in elementary school children in (Fung, Chow, & McBride-Chang, 2005) and receptive vocabulary and reading interest in elementary children without hearing impairment (Chow, McBride-Chang, Cheung, and Chow, 2008). How SLPs facilitate children's language skills during shared book reading in Chinese culture remains unknown.

### *Rationale and Research Questions*

Shared book reading is a common emergent literacy activity in European-American and Chinese cultures. Many studies have found that the emergent literacy environment is important for children's language (Ezell & Justice, 2005; van Kleeck, 2006). There is evidence that effective shared book reading increases vocabulary development (Coyne, Simmons, Kame'enui, & Stoolmiller, 2004; Sharif, Rieber, & Ozuah, 2002), general linguistic performance (Crain-Thoreson & Dale, 1999), and emergent literacy knowledge (Diehl & Vaughn, 2010; Justice, Pullen, &

Pence, 2008). Some studies have provided evidence of effective interventions for parents, teachers, and SLPs using shared book reading to improve children's language ability in the United States (van Kleeck, 2006). Specifically, decontextualized language has been associated with gains in children's language and reading comprehension (Dickinson & Snow, 1987; Dickinson & Tabors, 1991; Norris & Bruning, 1988; Snow, 1983). Researchers have found that during shared book reading, when adults made predictions and drew inferences about the text, children attempted to do the same (Torrance & Olson, 1985; van Kleeck, 2008). In addition, for preschoolers, making inferences helps them to understand the causal structure of the text that constitutes story grammar elements (e.g., setting, initiating event, attempts, internal response, and solution) (Kendeou et al., 2005; Makdissi & Boisclair, 2006).

Emergent literacy practice is culturally-based. Preschool teachers and SLPs who are not from a Taiwanese culture would need to be knowledgeable about shared book reading practices that occur with children from Taiwan. Understanding emergent literacy practices provided for preschoolers from Taiwan may be beneficial to teachers and clinicians who apply shared book reading with children whose cultural background is Taiwanese.

There are few and in some cases no studies that provide information about how mothers, preschool teachers, and SLPs conduct shared book reading with preschoolers

in Taiwan. There is a basic lack of descriptive information concerning the frequency of shared book reading, duration of shared book reading, types of books selected, and activities related to book reading. Further, mothers', preschool teachers' and SLPs' use of decontextualized questions during book reading have not been explored fully.

In this study, a wide range of information will be gained about the shared book reading practices of Taiwanese mothers, preschool teachers, and SLPs. The same two research questions were asked for each group. The research questions were:

1. What are the characteristics of Taiwanese mothers' shared book reading practices with preschoolers?
2. Do Taiwanese mothers use more contextualized than decontextualized questions during shared book reading?
3. What are the characteristics of Taiwanese preschool teachers' shared book reading practices with preschoolers?
4. Do Taiwanese preschool teachers use more contextualized than decontextualized questions during shared book reading?
5. What are the characteristics of Taiwanese SLPs' shared book reading practices with preschoolers?
6. Do Taiwanese SLPs use more contextualized than decontextualized questions during shared book reading?

### *Predicted Outcomes*

The duration of shared book reading and the types of books parents read to preschoolers have not been studied previously, therefore, no prediction was made. It was predicted that mothers will read multiple times a week based on the results of Wu and Honig (2010). It also was predicted that more contextualized questions than decontextualized questions would be produced during shared book reading based on the results of Chang and Lin (2006).

For preschool teachers' shared book reading practices, it was predicted that Taiwanese preschool teachers would read picture books with preschoolers the most. No studies presented the frequency and duration of their shared book reading, thus, no prediction was offered. There have not been previous studies of Taiwanese teachers' use of decontextualized questions; however if compared to Head Start teachers in America, it would be predicted that teachers would use more decontextualized questions than contextualized questions during shared book reading (Zucker et al., 2010).

There were no previous studies of Taiwanese SLPs' shared book reading practices. As a result, no predictions were made.

## Method

### *Participants*

The researcher sent flyers to preschools and hospitals and made personal contact with administrators to recruit participants for the study. The preschool teachers were asked to send flyers home to parents to recruit mothers for the study. Participants then contacted the researcher if they were willing to participate in the research. Ten mothers, 10 preschool teachers, 10 SLPs and 30 preschoolers (20 without specific language impairment and 10 with specific language impairment) participated in this study. Children only participated once in the study. That is, a child who was read to by a mother would not be read to by a teacher. All of the adult participants completed questionnaires that provided information about their background and emergent literacy practices with children. All of the children in the study were administered language tests and the children with language impairment received a test of nonverbal intelligence. Regulations and requirements from the University of Kansas Human Subjects Committee was obtained and followed, and Informed Consent and assent was received from all participants.

### *Characteristics of the Mothers*

According to the questionnaire completed by mothers (see Appendix A), all were native Mandarin Chinese speakers and spoke Mandarin Chinese at home at least 50%

of the time. Six of the mothers also spoke some Taiwanese at home, 3 of the mothers also spoke English, and 1 mother also spoke Hakka (i.e., a Chinese dialect) at home. Regarding mothers' educational level, 3 of the mothers had a bachelor's degree and 7 mothers had a master's degree (See Table 4).

#### *Characteristics of the Preschool Children Observed with Mothers*

Children ranged in age from 3 years, 2 months old to 5 years, 5 months old (mean=4 years 1.6 months old, sd=8.85 months) and were recruited from northern and western parts of Taiwan. Among these 10 children, 6 were male and 4 were female. According to parent report, all of the children were native Mandarin Chinese speakers and spoke Mandarin Chinese at home at least 50% of the time. Four of the children also spoke some Taiwanese at home and 1 child also spoke English at home.

The 10 children were typically developing. They displayed no hearing, visual, cognitive, language, and/or gross neurological impairment, oral-structural anomalies, or emotional or social disorders as reported by their parent on a questionnaire. In addition, parent report indicated that all children passed a hearing screening. The Preschooler Language Disorder Scale-Revised (PLDS-R) (Lin, 2008) and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R) (Chinese version) (Lu & Liu, 2006) were administered to each child individually in a quiet room by the author who is a native Mandarin Chinese speaker and a certified speech-language pathologist in

Taiwan. The PLDS-R screens receptive and expressive language skills. The PPVT-R measures children's receptive verbal vocabulary. The characteristics and test scores of the children are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Mothers' And Their Children's Characteristics

	Mothers' speaking language	Mothers' educational level	Children's age (years; months)	Children's gender	Children's spoken language at home	Children's PLDS-R score (z score)	Children's PPVT score (standard score)
Mother 1	50% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese 25% English	Bachelor's degree	3;8	Male	75% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese	0.58	121
Mother 2	75% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese	Bachelor's degree	4;6	Male	100% Mandarin	0.55	116
Mother 3	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	3;11	Female	100% Mandarin	1.37	123
Mother 4	100% Mandarin	Master's degree	3;10	Male	100% Mandarin	1.31	132
Mother 5	50% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese 25% English	Master's degree	5y	Female	50% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese 25% English	0.05	106
Mother 6	100% Mandarin	Master's degree	3y;6m	Female	100% Mandarin	1.07	138
Mother 7	50% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese	Master's degree	3y;7m	Female	100% Mandarin	1.55	120



25% Hakka							
Mother	50%	Master's	3y;2m	Male	75%	0.76	121
8	Mandarin	degree			Mandarin		
	50%				25%		
	Taiwanese				Taiwanese		
Mother	75%	Master's	4y;9m	Male	75%	0.32	118
9	Mandarin	degree			Mandarin		
	25%				25%		
	Taiwanese				Taiwanese		
Mother	75%	Master's	5y;5m	Male	100%	0.27	125
10	Mandarin	degree			Mandarin		
	25%						
	English						

*Note.* The PLDS-R is Preschooler Language Disorder Scale-Revised (Lin, 2008). The mean of a z-score is 0, with -1.0 being 1 sd below the mean and +1.0 being 1 sd above the mean. The PPVT is Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (Chinese version) (Lu & Liu, 2006). The mean for this test is 100 and the sd is 15.

### *Characteristics of the Preschool Teachers*

Ten preschool teachers recruited from five different preschools in northern, western, and southern parts of Taiwan participated in this study. Three of these preschools were private preschools and 2 of them were public preschools. All the teachers were native Mandarin Chinese speakers and Mandarin Chinese was their dominant language. Taiwanese was also spoken by six of the teachers and English was spoken by 3 of the teachers in their classroom. With respect to teachers' educational levels, 9 of the teachers had a bachelor's degree and 1 teacher had a master's degree in education. All the teachers were certified and had at least one year experience working as a preschool teacher (mean=8.2 years; sd=4.7 years) (See Table 5).

### *Characteristics of the Select Preschool Children from the Preschool Classes*

Each teacher selected one child who met the requirement of a typically developing 3 to 5 years old in their classroom to participate in the study. The 10 selected children were aged from 3 years and 1 month old to 5 years and 8 months old (mean=4 years and 5.5 months old, sd=12.13 months). Among the 10 children, 6 of them were female and 4 were male. All children received two language tests, the PLDS-R (Lin, 2008) and the PPVT-R (Chinese version) (Lu & Liu, 2006) individually in a quiet room by the author who is a native Mandarin Chinese speaker and a certified speech-language pathologist in Taiwan. All children scored within normal limits and some children scored above average on both of the tests (See Table 5).

**Table 5. Preschool Teachers' And Children's Characteristics**

	Teachers' speaking language	Teachers' educational level	Years of teaching	Children's age	Children's gender	Children's PLDS-R score (z score)	Children's PPVT score (standard score)
Teacher 1	50% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese 25% English	Bachelor's degree	1 year	4;6	Male	0.7	112
Teacher 2	100% Mandarin	Master's degree	9 years	3;1	Female	0.94	117
Teacher 3	75% Mandarin 25%	Bachelor's degree	14 years	5;8	Male	-0.17	105

	Taiwanese						
Teacher 4	75% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese	Bachelor's degree	5 years	5;5	Female	-0.17	122
Teacher 5	75% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese	Bachelor's degree	10 years	4;4	Female	0.32	113
Teacher 6	75% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese	Bachelor's degree	10years	5;0	Male	-0.06	102
Teacher 7	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	15 years	4;6	Female	0.32	119
Teacher 8	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	2 years	5;8	Male	0.48	126
Teacher 9	50% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese 25% English	Bachelor's degree	5 years	3;1	Female	0.94	127
Teacher 10	75% Mandarin 25% English	Bachelor's degree	11 years	3;4	Female	-0.02	115

*Note.* The PLDS-R is Preschooler Language Disorder Scale-Revised (Lin, 2008). The mean for a z score is 0, with -1.0 being 1 standard deviation below the mean and +1.0 being one standard deviation above the mean. The PPVT is Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (Chinese version) (Lu & Liu, 2006). The mean for this test is 100 and the sd is 15.

### *Characteristics of the SLPs*

Ten SLPs were recruited from 6 different hospitals in northern, northeastern, and western parts of Taiwan. All the SLPs were native Mandarin Chinese speakers and Mandarin Chinese was their dominant language. Nine SLPs only spoke Mandarin Chinese and 1 SLP also spoke some Taiwanese in their sessions. Eight of the SLPs

had bachelor's degrees and 2 SLPs had master's degrees in speech-language pathology. All the SLPs were certified and had at least one year working experience as an SLP (mean=6.8 years; sd= 7.5 years) (See Table 6).

#### *Characteristics of the Select Children from the SLPs' Caseloads*

The 10 clients selected by their SLPs were native Mandarin Chinese speakers aged from 3 years and 1 month old to 5 years and 7 months old (mean=4 years and 0.1 month old, sd=8.77 months). SLPs were asked to select clients who were: (1) 3 to 5 year olds (2) had a language delay or language impairment diagnosis and (3) did not have diagnoses of hearing, visual, cognitive, and/or gross neurological impairment, oral-structural anomalies, or emotional or social disorders. Among these 10 children, 6 of the children were male and 4 of them were female. Three tests were given to these children by the author who is a certified SLP in Taiwan: the PPVT-R (Chinese version) (Lu & Liu, 2006), the PLDS-R (Lin, 2008) and the Leiter International Performance Scale (LIPS) (Arthur, 1952). The LIPS (Arthur, 1952) measures non-verbal intelligence. Two children scored within normal limits and 8 scored above average on the Leiter International Performance Scale (Arthur, 1952); however, they scored below normal limits on the PLDS-R indicating Specific Language Impairment (SLI). According to their test scores on sections of receptive and expressive language, 6 of the children had mixed language impairment (i.e., both

receptive and expressive impairments) and 4 of the children had expressive language impairment only (See Table 6).

Table 6. SLPs' And Children's Characteristics

	SLP's speaking language	SLP's educational level	Years of working as an SLP	Children's age	Children's gender	Children's LIPS (standard score)	Children's PLDS-R score (z score)	Children's PPVT-R score (standard score)
SLP 1	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	6 years	4;2	Female	125	-1.6 (expressive language impairment)	92
SLP 2	75% Mandarin 25% Taiwanese	Bachelor's degree	6 years	3;1	Male	150	-2.2 (mixed language impairment)	99
SLP 3	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	1 year	3;9	Male	105	-1.8 (mixed language impairment)	97
SLP 4	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	7 years	4;1	Female	127	-2.14 (mixed language impairment)	113
SLP 5	100% Mandarin	Master's degree	27 years	4;2	Male	125	-1.91 (expressive language impairment)	101
SLP 6	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	3 years	4;8	Male	101	-2.98 (mixed language impairment)	96
SLP 7	100% Mandarin	Bachelor's degree	9 years	3;7	Female	116	-1.71 (mixed language impairment)	105

SLP	100%	Bachelor's	5 years	5;7	Male	116	-3.34	107
8	Mandarin	degree					(expressive language impairment)	
SLP	100 %	Bachelor's	3 years	3;2	Male	123	-1.71	93
9	Mandarin	degree					(mixed language impairment)	
SLP	100 %	Master's	1 year	3;10	Female	122	-1.65	111
10	Mandarin	degree					(expressive language impairment)	

*Note.* The LIPS is Leiter International Performance Scale (Arthur, 1952). The mean of this test is 100 and the sd is 16. The PLDS-R is Preschooler Language Disorder Scale-Revised (Lin, 2008). The mean for the z score is 0, with numbers below 0 indicating the number of standard deviations below the mean and numbers above 0 representing the number of standard deviations above the mean. The PPVT-R is Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (Chinese version) (Lu & Liu, 2006) The mean for this test is 100 and the sd is 15.

### *Procedure for Shared Book Reading Sessions*

Shared book reading sessions were video and audio recorded in a quiet setting with the adult and child present. All the sessions were one-on-one shared book reading sessions. The 10 mothers read with their children, the 10 preschool teachers read with a child in their class, and 10 SLPs read with a child from their caseloads. Each child was only read to by an adult once for shared book reading sessions. The researcher scheduled a time with the teachers, SLPs, and mothers when they thought the child would be attentive for shared book reading. Adult participants had a chance to look through the book quickly before they read with the child. An instruction was then read to the participants as follows:

“We have two books, *Frog Where Are You?* and *Mooncake*,  
for you to look at with the child. You can look at *Frog Where  
Are You?* for 5 to 10 minutes first and then read *Mooncake*. If you  
or your child/student/client needs a break between the two books,  
you can just take a rest. This is not a test for you or the child. We  
are collecting information about book reading between  
mothers/teachers/SLPs and children. Please look at the books with  
the child as you usually do.”

Two books, *Mooncake* (Asch, 1983) and *Frog Where Are You?* (Mayer, 1969) were  
provided by the researcher for mothers, preschool teachers, and SLPs. Talk elicited  
from sharing the book, *Frog Where Are You?* was not analyzed for this study.

Instead, it served as a “warm up” for the child and adult. *Frog Where Are You?* is a  
short, wordless book. It served the purpose of familiarizing the dyad with the  
equipment and being observed while sharing a book. The next book, *Mooncake*, was  
the book from which the talking from the adult to the child was analyzed for the study.  
*Mooncake* was translated from English to Chinese text by the researcher who is a  
native Chinese speaker and put into the book for the adult to read as Chinese text.

## *Stimuli*

The book, *Mooncake* (Asch, 1983), was used in the current study because it also has been used in previous studies (Hammett & van Kleeck, 2003; van Kleeck, Woude, & Hammett, 2006) to study mothers' language during shared book reading. Also, the book *Mooncake* (Asch, 1983) is a narrative picture book. A previous study found that narrative picture books were the most common type of genre read by mothers in Taiwan (Tseng, 2002). This book has not been translated in Chinese and therefore was unfamiliar to mothers, preschool teachers, and SLPs in Taiwan. To ensure that it was not known, adults were asked if they had read the book before. None of the participants reported that they had read the book previously. There are 28 pages, 50 sentences, and 537 words in the book. The mean length of the sentences is 10.74 words. After translated to Chinese, there were 50 sentences in the book. The total number of words in the book is 837 and there are 16.74 words per sentence on average. The translated Chinese book was pilot tested by having it read by a few Chinese mothers in the United States before having it read by participants. In these pilot shared reading sessions, these mothers and children were engaged in the book reading activity. Also, mothers reported that the translated Chinese text was easy to read and to understand.



After the shared book reading session, adult participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire about their background information and how they typically conduct shared book reading (see Appendices A, B, and C). The questions about frequency, duration, and types of books they read with children were asked on the questionnaires. For the questions about the types of books adults read to children, picture book and story book were both listed as the options for participants to select. In the United States, picture books and story books are often considered the same. However, in Taiwan, these two types of books are considered different books. In Taiwan, picture books are typically thought of as books that use pictures to tell the story. This type of book contains a great amount of pictures (i.e., has pictures on almost every page) and has a small amount of text to explain the story. Story books are thought of as books that use text to tell the story. This type of book contains a great amount of text and a small amount of pictures to illustrate the story.

### *Transcription*

The audio recordings from the shared reading sessions were transcribed using the Systematic Analysis Language Transcripts (SALT, Research version 9.0) (Miller & Chapman, 2009). Both children's and adults' utterances during shared book reading were transcribed. The utterances were transcribed in Mandarin from Taiwan by the researcher who speaks Mandarin as her first language. An independent transcriber

who is a native speaker of Mandarin transcribed a randomly selected 20% of the sample across all of the 30 samples. Inter-reliability was calculated on a word-by-word basis using the formula of  $\frac{\text{agreements}}{\text{agreements} + \text{disagreements}} \times 100$  and the inter-reliability was 98.63%. The Mandarin transcription then was translated to English by the researcher. An independent translator who is bilingual in Mandarin and English translated a randomly selected 20% of all of the 30 samples. Inter-reliability was calculated on a morpheme-by-morpheme basis using the formula of  $\frac{\text{agreements}}{\text{agreements} + \text{disagreements}} \times 100$  and the inter-reliability was 89.74%. The video-recordings were used for transcription when there was ambiguity in understanding the meaning associated with what the adult said.

### *Coding Utterances*

The coding of utterances also was conducted using the Systematic Analysis Language Transcripts (SALT, Research version 9.0) (Miller & Chapman, 2009) by the researcher. Only the adults' extratextual talk in transcriptions was coded. Specifically, the adult's contextualized questions and decontextualized questions were coded using the coding system adapted from previous studies (De Temple & Snow, 1992; Hammett & van Kleeck, 2003; van Kleeck et al., 2006). Definitions and examples of each category are provided in table 7.

Decontextualized language refers to concepts and notions removed from the immediate situation, and is used to convey information to audiences who share limited information with the speaker or who are removed from the physical context (Morgan & Goldstein, 2004). Decontextualized language used the text for recollections of personal experiences, comments or questions about general knowledge, or for drawing inferences and making predictions (De Temple & Snow, 1992). In contrast, contextualized language refers to discussion about an ongoing concrete activity, in which the information is present (van Kleeck, 2006).

Contextualized language requires children to discuss, describe, and/or respond to information they can readily perceive (Zucker, Justice, Piasta, & Kaderavek, 2010).

For example, contextualized question would be if an adult asks a child to label an object depicted on the cover of a book, “What is that?” During shared book reading, participants’ extratextual questions about decontextualized language (i.e., predictions, inferences, and child’s experiences) were coded as decontextualized questions.

Specifically, participants’ questions/request about recall, general knowledge, personal experiences, explanations, inferences, and predictions about the book were coded as decontextualized questions. Participants’ extratextual questions about contextualized language (i.e., labeling, describing pictures, and locating objects) were coded as contextualized questions.

Table 7. Definitions and examples of decontextualized and contextualized questions

Decontextualized questions/requests		
DCQ1	Questions about judgment or evaluation (about characters, objects, or ideas): this was defined as the mother asking questions about internal state (sad, hungry), judgments (beautiful, funny), and point of view (what character is thinking/feeling).	How do you think he feels?
DCQ2	Questions about general knowledge: This was defined as the mother asking questions that the child can answer based on general knowledge.	What season comes after winter?
DCQ3	Connections to other books/personal experiences: This was defined as the mother asking questions about connecting the content of the book to other books, the real life, or the child's experiences.	The bear saw snow. Have you ever seen snow?
DCQ4	Questions about explanation/inferencing/solutions/definitions/similarities/differences: this was defined as the mother asking the child to provide an explanation, to make an inference, or to provide a solution.	Why did he build a rocket? What to do? What does countdown mean? Aim this arrow at what?
DCQ5	Questions about predictions: this was defined as the mother asking the child to discuss what might happen next or outcome of the story.	What would happen after the wind knocked down the rocket?
DCQ6	Connect information: this was defined as the mother asking the child to summarize, synthesize, or integrate information from the book.	What are the things the bear did to get the moon? Did Bear really go to the moon?
DCQ7	Questions about recalling information from the story.	Where did Bear go to eat the cake?
Contextualized questions/requests		
CQ1	Questions about labeling/locating objects in the text: Adults asking the child to provide the name or location of the objects in the book.	Where is the little bird? Where did the arrow fall?

CQ2	Questions about labeling pictures: Adults asking the children to provide the name of the pictures in the book.	Adult pointed at the picture of a rocket and asked, “What is that?”
CQ3	Questions about descriptions of illustrations: Adults asking questions about perceptual properties (size, shape, color), or parts of objects/characters. This includes colors, numbers, types of objects, quantity, or possession.	What color is this?
CQ4	Questions about texts/print: Adults asking questions about words or characters in the text and/or about print (i.e., author, cover page)	How do you pronounce this word?
CQ5	Complete cloze task: Pause to allow child to complete a sentence/phrase/word.	The bear is going to_____?
CQ6	Questions or requests about completing tasks such as counting, interacting with the characters in the story.	Did you say goodbye to Bear? Would you like to count for him?
CQ7	Questions or requests about drawing attention to the story	Do you see that?
CQ8	Questions or requests to invite children to engage in book sharing.	Do you want to see Bear build the rocket ship? Do you want to take a bite out of the moon too? Can I go with you to the moon too?

The author coded the first pass of the samples. An independent coder who is a graduate student in the Speech-Language-Hearing Department and a native Mandarin Chinese speaker coded a randomly selected 20% of the samples across all of the 30 samples. Inter-reliability was calculated on a code-by-code basis using the formula of  $\frac{\text{agreements}}{\text{agreements} + \text{disagreements}} \times 100$  and the inter-reliability was 90.23%.

## Results

The purpose of this study was to examine Taiwanese mothers, preschool teachers, and SLPs' shared book reading practices with preschoolers. In addition, Taiwanese mothers', preschool teachers', and SLPs' use of contextualized and decontextualized questions was examined. Mothers', teachers', and SLPs' shared book reading practices including frequency and duration of shared book reading, types of reading materials, and shared book reading activities were also analyzed descriptively. The frequency of mothers', teachers', and SLPs' questions were not normally distributed and therefore nonparametric statistics were applied for analyzing data. The Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-rank test (Siegel & Castellan, 1988) was used to compare the number of contextualized questions compared to decontextualized questions for each group (i.e., mothers, preschool teachers, and SLPs) and to evaluate whether the differences were significant at the .05 alpha level. Effect sizes (Cohen's *d*) also were calculated to determine the magnitude of change. According to Cohen (1992), an effect size in a range of 0.2 to 0.5 was defined as a small effect, an effect size in a range of 0.5 to 0.8 was defined as a medium effect, and a effect size higher than 0.8 was defend as a large effect. The results of this study will be presented in three sections: (1) mothers' shared book reading practices, (2) preschool teachers' shared reading practices, and (3) SLPs' shared book reading practices.

### *Mothers' Shared Book Reading Practices*

The research questions about mothers' shared book reading practices were as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of Taiwanese mothers' shared book reading practices with their preschooler children?
2. Do Taiwanese mothers use more contextualized than decontextualized questions during shared book reading?

### *Characteristics of Taiwanese Mothers' Shared Book Reading Practices*

#### *The occurrence of shared reading*

Shared book reading between mothers and their preschool children was a common activity in the home setting. The responses from 10 Taiwanese mothers' questionnaires indicated that all the mothers read to their children. Also, all the 10 mothers read the same book multiple times (i.e., repetitive reading) with their children. Most of the mothers (8/10) reported setting a definite time for reading with their children and 2 mothers reported did not set a definite time to read with children. Of the 8 mothers, 7 read at bedtime and 1 mother read after dinner and at bedtime.

Most of the mothers began to read to their children at a young age. Half of the mothers began to read to their children at the age of one (i.e., 2 began to read to their children when they were 1 year old and 3 began to read to their children when they

were 1 and a half years old). Three of the mothers began to read to their children under the age of one (i.e., one began to read when their child was 9 months old and 2 began to read when their children were 6 and 8 months old). One of the mothers began to read to their child when their child was two years old and another mother began to read to their child when their child was three years of age (See Table 8).

Table 8. Age at Which Mothers Began to Read to Their Child

Age	Proportion of Mothers
At 3 years old	0.1 (1/10)
At 2 years old	0.1 (1/10)
1 year old	0.5 (5/10)
Under age of 1	0.3 (3/10)

Regarding the frequency and duration of mothers' shared book reading with their child, most of the mothers read multiple times a week for 5 to 20 minutes. Five of the mothers read 2 to 3 times a week. Three of the mothers reported reading to their children once a day. One mother read once a week and one mother read more than once a month. With respect to duration, 4 mothers reported their shared reading sessions with their child usually lasted 5 to 10 minutes. Two of the mothers read to their child for 10 to 15 minutes, 2 mothers read for 15 to 20 minutes, and 2 mothers read for 35 to 40 minutes (See Table 9). The total amount of time mothers reading with children per week ranged from 5 to 280 minutes (mean=79.5 minutes; sd= 82.8 minutes).



Table 9. Frequency and Duration of Mothers' Shared Book Reading Sessions

		Proportion of mothers
Frequency of shared-reading	Once a day	0.3 (3/10)
	2-3 times/week	0.5 (5/10)
	Once a week	0.1 (1/10)
	2-3 times a month	0.1 (1/10)
Duration of shared book reading	5-10 minutes	0.4 (4/10)
	10-15 minutes	0.2 (2/10)
	15-20 minutes	0.2 (2/10)
	35-40 minutes	0.2 (2/10)

*The type of materials selected for shared reading*

According to mothers' reports about their reading materials, all the mothers (10/10) read picture books (i.e., books that use pictures to tell the story plot with a small proportion of words) to their children. Half of the mothers read story books (i.e., books that use words to tell the story plot with a small proportion of pictures), 40% of the mothers (4/10) read informational books, and 20% of the mothers (2/10) read moral stories. One mother reported reading rhyming books, one mother reported reading children's poems, and another reported reading myths to their children.

Among these reading materials, the most often selected material was picture books which were selected by 80 % of mothers (8/10). For other materials, 1 mother reported story books and 1 mother reported children's magazines as the most often selected material (See Table 10).

A majority of the mothers (6/10) reported that their children usually chose what they want to be read. In contrast, 30% reported that both they and their children chose materials. Only 1 mother reported choosing materials by herself.

Table 10. Reading Materials That Were Selected For Shared Book Reading

	Materials	Proportion of mothers
Types of reading materials	Picture books	1.0 (10/10)
	Story books	0.5 (5/10)
	Information books	0.4 (4/10)
	Moral stories	0.2 (2/10)
	Rhyming songs	0.1 (1/10)
	Children's poems	0.1 (1/10)
	Myth	0.1 (1/10)
Frequency of materials selected	Picture books	0.7 (7/10)
	Story books	0.1 (1/10)
	Picture/story books	0.1 (1/10)
	Children's magazines	0.1 (1/10)
Person who chooses materials	Mother	0.1 (1/10)
	Child	0.6 (6/10)
	Mother/child	0.3 (3/10)

#### *Comparison of Taiwanese Mothers' Use of Contextualized and Decontextualized*

##### *Questions*

The total number of mothers' extratextual questions during shared book reading was 384 (mean=38.4, sd=18.3) of the total 982 extratextual maternal sentences.

Thus, during shared book reading, 39% (384/982) of mothers' utterances were question forms. Of these extratextual questions, there were 175 total contextualized questions (mean=17.5, sd=10.77) and 209 decontextualized questions (mean=20.9,

sd=8.58) (See Table 11). Forty-five percent of mothers' questions were contextualized questions and 54% of the mothers' questions were decontextualized questions. The frequency distribution of all questions that mothers asked during shared book reading was examined by using SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions). The distribution plot indicated that the frequencies of questions were not normally distributed. Therefore, data were analyzed using a nonparametric test, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). The mothers asked significantly more decontextualized questions than contextualized questions (Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-rank test,  $T = 7$ ,  $N = 10$ ,  $p=0.0207$ ,  $d = 0.82$ ). (See mother's raw data in Appendices G and H).

Table 11. Frequency and Proportion of Mothers' Questions

Mothers (N=10)	Total proportion (frequency)	Mean proportion	Standard Deviation
Contextualized questions	0.455 (175/384)	0.432 (17.5)	0.097 (10.77)
Decontextualized questions	0.544 (209/384)	0.5672 (20.9)	0.097 (8.58)

#### *Sub-categories of contextualized questions*

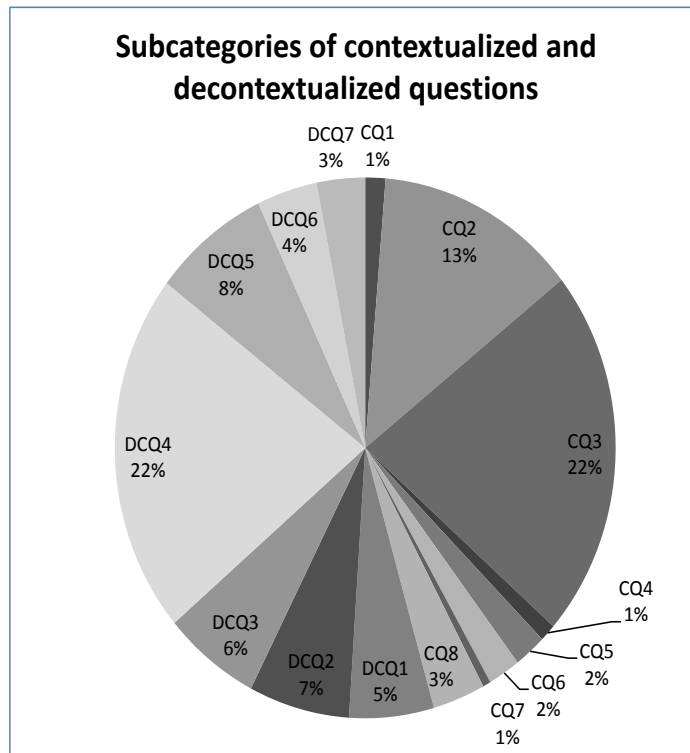
Mothers' total uses of questions in subcategories also were calculated and divided by the total number of mothers' extratextual questions (i.e., 384) to yield proportions. The results indicated that, among the subcategories of contextualized questions, the mothers asked questions about descriptions of illustrations the most,

22% of the time. The second most often asked question type was about labeling pictures at 13%. Mothers asked questions for engaging children 3% of the time, followed by cloze task questions (2%), questions about counting (2%), locating objects (1%), text and print (1%), and for drawing attention (.5%) (See Figure 1).

#### *Sub-categories of decontextualized questions*

For decontextualized questions, mothers' total uses of questions in subcategories were divided by the total number of mothers' extratextual questions (i.e., 384) to determine proportions. The results showed that mothers asked questions about inferencing, explanations, and/or solutions the most, 22 % of the time. The second most asked questions were about predictions (8 %). Questions about general knowledge occurred 7 % of the time, followed by questions about personal experiences (7 %), judgment and evaluations (5%), summarizing, synthesizing, and/or integrating (4%), and recalling information (3%) (See Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percentages of mothers' questions in subcategories



CQ1-locating objects

CQ2-labeling pictures

CQ3-descriptions about illustrations

CQ4-texts and print

CQ5-cloze task

CQ6-counting

CQ7-drawing attention

CQ8-engaging

DCQ1-judgment/evaluation

DCQ2-general knowledge

DCQ3-connections to personal experiences

DCQ4-inferencing/explanation/solutions

DCQ5-predictions

DCQ6-summarizing/synthesizing/integrating

DCQ7-recalling information

### *Preschool Teachers' Shared Book Reading Practices*

The research questions about preschool teachers were as follows:

3. What are the characteristics of Taiwanese preschool teachers' shared book reading practices with preschoolers?
4. Do Taiwanese preschool teachers use more contextualized than decontextualized questions during shared book reading?

### *Characteristics of Taiwanese Preschool Teachers' Shared Book Reading Practices*

#### *The occurrence of shared reading*

It was found that shared book reading was commonly conducted by Taiwanese preschool teachers in preschool settings. All 10 Taiwanese preschool teachers reported reading to children and 90% of the preschool teachers (9/10) reported conducting repetitive reading (reading the same book multiple times) with children. Half of the teachers reported setting a definite time to read to children but the other half did not. Among the half who reported setting a definite time for shared reading, 2 teachers read after snack, 1 read before lunch, 1 read at nap time, and 1 read in the afternoon (See Table 12).

Table 12. Times that Teachers Reported Reading to Children

	Proportion of teachers
After snack	0.2 (2/10)
Before lunch	0.1 (1/10)
Nap time	0.1 (1/10)
After noon	0.1 (1/10)
No time reported	0.5 (5/10)

With respect to the frequency and duration of teachers' shared book reading with children, 90% of the teachers (9/10) read multiple times a week for 10 to 20 minutes.

Regarding frequency, 2 of the teachers read more than once a day. Three of the teachers reported reading to their children once a day. Four of the teachers read 2 to 3 times a week and 1 teacher read once a week. With respect to duration, 2 teachers reported it usually took 5 to 10 minutes for one shared reading session with children.

One teacher reported it took 5 to 20 minutes, 2 teachers reported 10 to 15 minutes, 4 teachers reported 15 to 20 minutes, and 1 reported 20 to 25 minutes (See Table 13).

Table 13. Frequency and Duration of Teachers' Shared Book Reading Sessions

		Proportion of teachers
Frequency of shared-reading	More than once a day	0.2 (2/10)
	Once a day	0.3 (3/10)
	2-3 times a week	0.4 (4/10)
	Once a week	0.1 (1/10)
Duration of shared book reading	5-10 minutes	0.2 (2/10)
	5-20 minutes	0.1 (1/10)
	10-15 minutes	0.2 (2/10)
	15-20 minutes	0.4 (4/10)
	20-25 minutes	0.1 (1/10)

### *The type of materials selected for shared reading*

Regarding reading materials, teachers reported the materials that they would usually read to children on the questionnaires. Ninety percent of the teachers (9/10) reported picture books were their reading materials. Seven of the teachers (70%) reported reading story books, 5 teachers (50%) reported reading information books, 4 (40%) reported reading moral stories, 2 (20%) reported reading rhyming songs, 1 (10%) reported reading children's poems, and 1(10%) reported reading myths.

Among these reading materials, 80% of the teachers (8/10) selected picture books as the most often shared reading material used in their classrooms. For other materials, 1 teacher reported moral stories as most often selected material (See Table 14). Forty percent of the teachers (4/10) reported that teachers usually chose the materials for their shared book reading with children. Sixty percent of the teachers (6/10) reported both children and teachers chose materials for their shared book reading sessions (See Table 14).

Table 14. Reading Materials That Are Selected For Shared Book Reading

		Proportions of teachers
Types of reading materials	Picture books	0.9 (9/10)
	Story books	0.7 (7/10)
	Information books	0.5 (5/10)
	Moral stories	0.4 (4/10)
	Rhyming songs	0.2 (2/10)
	Children's poems	0.1 (1/10 )
	Myth	0.1 (1/10)
Frequency of materials	Picture books	0.8 (8/10)



selected	Myth	0.1 (1/10)
Person who choose	Teachers	0.4 (4/10)
materials	Teachers/children	0.6 (6/10)

*Activities conducted prior to, during, and after shared book reading*

Teachers also reported if they conducted activities prior to, during, and after shared book reading. Half of the teachers conducted activities during and after shared book reading. Two teachers (2/10) conducted activities at all three time periods. One teacher conducted activities prior to and during shared book reading, one teacher conducted activities only during shared book reading, and one teacher did not conduct activities at any of the three time periods. Some examples of the activities conducted were reported by the teachers. Prior to the shared book reading, a few teachers (20%) told some of the story plots, had children predict the story plots, and showed pictures in the book to draw attention to the story. During shared book reading, 2 teachers (20%) used materials and/or pictures to present or demonstrate contents or concepts in the story. One teacher reported conducting role play to present the story plot during shared book reading. Another teacher reported using finger puppets to tell the story. After shared book reading, some teachers conducted group discussion to talk about the story plot and share past experiences. A few teachers (20%) conducted art activities that related to the story. One teacher reported asking children to retell the

story after shared book reading. All the teachers' responses for conducting activities prior to, during, and after shared book read are listed in appendix D.

### *Comparison of Taiwanese Teachers' Use of Contextualized and Decontextualized Questions*

The total number of extratextual sentences of teachers during shared book reading was 1,319. The total number of teachers' extratextual questions during shared book reading was 516 (mean=51.6, sd=32.85). Thirty-nine percent of the teachers' utterances were extratextual questions. The total number of teachers' contextualized questions was 224 (mean=22.4, sd=13.32). The total number of teachers' decontextualized questions was 292 (mean=29.2, sd=20.87) (See Table 15). The proportions of teachers' use of contextualized questions and decontextualized questions were also presented. In this study, 43% (mean=50.38%, sd=21.54%) of teachers' questions were contextualized questions and 57% of (mean=49.61%, sd=21.54%) teachers' questions were decontextualized questions (See Table 8). SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) was used to examine the distribution of the frequencies of all questions that teachers asked during shared book reading. The distribution plot showed that the frequencies of questions were not normally distributed. Data were then analyzed using a nonparametric test, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). The test result showed

that the number of teachers' decontextualized questions were not significantly different than their contextualized questions during shared book reading (Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-rank test,  $T = 19$ ,  $N = 10$ ,  $p=0.2124$ ,  $d = 0.79$ ). (See teachers' raw data in Appendices I and J).

Table 15. Frequency and Proportion of Teachers' Questions

Teachers (N=10)	Total proportion(frequency)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Contextualized questions	0.4341 (224/516)	0.5038(22.4)	0.2154 (13.32)
Decontextualized questions	0.5658 (292/516)	0.4961(29.2)	0.2154 (20.87)

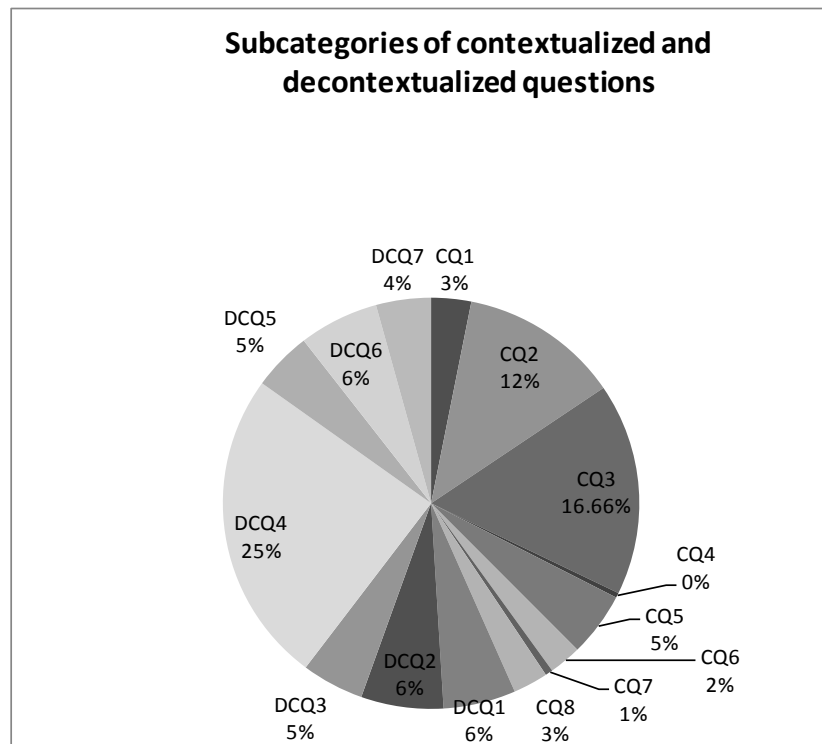
#### *Sub-categories of contextualized questions*

Teachers' total uses of questions in subcategories were also calculated in proportions and are reported in percentages. Among the subcategories of contextualized questions, the teachers asked questions about descriptions of illustrations the most (17%). For questions about labeling pictures, the proportion was 12% of all questions. Cloze task questions were present 5% of the time. Questions about locating objects, engaging children, and about counting all occurred 3% of the time. Questions for drawing attention and questions about text and print were present less than 1% of the time (See Figure 3).

### *Sub-categories of decontextualized questions*

For decontextualized questions, the teachers asked questions about inferencing, explanations, and solutions the most, with 25% of all questions from teachers being of this kind. All other decontextualized questions such as questions about summarizing, synthesizing, and/or integrating, questions about judgment and evaluations, questions about personal experiences, questions about predictions, and questions about recalling information were in the 4-6% range (See Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentages of teachers' questions in subcategories



CQ1-locating objects
CQ2-labeling pictures
CQ3-descriptions about illustrations
CQ4-texts and print
CQ5-cloze task
CQ6-counting
CQ7-drawing attention
CQ8-engineering

DCQ1-judgment/evaluation
DCQ2-general knowledge
DCQ3-connections to personal experiences
DCQ4-inferencing/explanation/solutions
DCQ5-predictions
DCQ6-summarizing/synthesizing/integrating
DCQ7-recalling information

### *SLPs' Shared Book Reading Practices*

The research questions about SLPs were as follows:

5. What are the characteristics of Taiwanese SLPs' shared book reading practices with preschoolers?
6. Do Taiwanese SLPs use more contextualized than decontextualized questions during shared book reading?

### *Characteristics of Taiwanese SLPs' Shared Book Reading Practices*

#### *The occurrence of shared reading*

According to the questionnaire completed by SLPs, it was common for Taiwanese SLPs to conduct shared book reading with children with SLI in intervention sessions. All 10 SLPs conducted shared reading in their intervention sessions. Repetitive reading (i.e., reading the same book multiple times with children) also was found to be a common practice in SLPs' intervention sessions. Nine of the 10 SLPs conducted repetitive reading with children.

Regarding the frequency and duration of SLPs' shared book reading with children, most of the SLPs (9/10) read multiple times a week for 10 to 20 minutes (8/10). Four of the SLPs read more than once a day. One of the SLPs reported reading to their children once a day. Four of the SLPs read 2 to 3 times a week and 1 SLP read once a month. With respect to duration, 2 SLPs reported it usually took 10 to 15 minutes for

one shared reading session with children. Six SLPs reported one shared book reading session usually lasted 15 to 20 minutes and 2 SLPs reported 20 to 25 minutes (See Table 16).

Table 16. Frequency and Duration of SLPs' Shared Book Reading Sessions

		Proportion of SLPs
Frequency of shared-reading	More than once a day	0.4 (4/10)
	Once a day	0.1 (1/10)
	2-3 times a week	0.4 (4/10)
	Once a month	0.1 (1/10)
Duration of shared book reading	10-15 minutes	0.2 (2/10)
	15-20 minutes	0.6 (6/10)
	20-25 minutes	0.2 (2/10)

*The type of materials selected for shared reading*

SLPs reported the materials that they would read to children in their intervention sessions. All 10 SLPs reported picture books and story books as their reading materials. Three SLPs (3/10) reported moral stories and 2 SLPs (2/10) reported rhyming songs as their reading materials. Among these reading materials, the most often selected material was the picture book, which was selected by all 10 SLPs (see Table 12). Most of the SLPs (8/10) reported that they usually chose the materials for their shared book reading with children. However, two SLPs (2/10) reported that they chose the materials along with the children (See Table 17).

Table 17. Reading Materials

		Proportion of SLPs
Types of reading materials	Picture books	1.0 (10/10)
	Story books	1.0 (10/10)
	Moral stories	0.3 (3/10)
	Rhyming songs	0.2 (2/10)
Most often selected materials	Picture books	1.0 (10/10)
Person who chose materials	SLPs	0.8 (8/10)
	SLPs/children	0.2 (2/10)

*Activities conducted prior to, during, and after shared book reading*

SLPs also answered three questions about if they conducted activities prior to, during, and after shared book reading. Half of the SLPs conducted activities at all three time periods, prior to, during, and after shared book reading. Two SLPs (2/10) conducted activities only after shared book reading, 2 SLPs (2/10) did not conduct activities at any of the three time periods, and one SLP (1/10) conducted activities during and after shared book reading. Prior to shared book reading, one SLP reported sharing past experiences that related to the book with children. Another SLP reported introducing characters, objects, and events of the story to children. During shared book reading, one SLP reported playing picture matching games using pictures that were related to the book. Another SLP reported using materials that related to the story to demonstrate the content or events in the story so children could understand new concepts. After shared book reading, one SLP reported asking questions to help



children retell the story. Another SLP reported asking children to role play and present the story. An SLP shared that she asked children to tell about past experiences that were related to the book. All of the SLPs' responses of activities are listed in appendix E.

### *Comparison of Taiwanese SLPs' Use of Contextualized and Decontextualized*

#### *Questions*

The total number of SLPs' extratextual sentences during shared book reading was 2,355. The total number of SLPs' extratextual questions during shared book reading was 790 (mean=79, sd =48.11). Thirty-four percent of SLPs utterances were extratextual questions. Of these extratextual questions, 353 (mean=35.3, sd =26.49) questions were contextualized questions and 437 (mean=43.7, sd=25.79) questions were decontextualized questions (See Table 13). Forty-five percent (mean=38.22%, sd=20.49%) of SLPs' questions were contextualized questions and 55% (mean=61.7%, sd=20.49%) of SLPs' were decontextualized questions (See Table 18).

The distribution of the frequencies of all questions that SLPs asked during shared book reading was examined by using SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions).

The distribution plot indicated that the frequency of questions was not normally distributed. Therefore, a nonparametric test, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test (Siegel & Castellan, 1988), was used to analyze the data. The test result showed

that the SLPs' decontextualized questions were not significantly different from the contextualized questions during shared book reading (Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-rank test,  $T = 16.5$ ,  $N = 10$ ,  $p=0.0817$ ,  $d = 0.62$ ). The SLPs' data for this analysis are in Appendices K and L.

Tabel 18. Frequency and Proportion of SLPs' Questions

SLPs (N=10)	Total proportion(frequency)	Mean	Sd
Contextualized questions	0.4468 (353/790)	0.3822(35.3)	0.2049(26.49)
Decontextualized questions	0.5561 (437/790)	0.6177(43.7)	0.2049(25.79)

*Sub-categories of contextualized questions produced by SLPs*

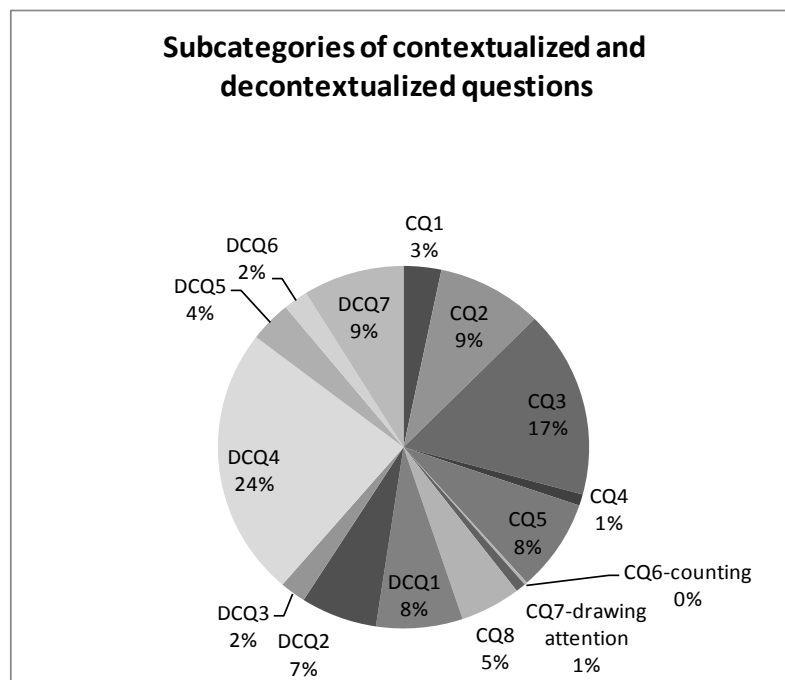
SLPs' total use of questions in subcategories was calculated and divided by the total number of SLPs' extratextual questions to yield proportions and then converted to percentages. The SLPs asked questions about the descriptions of illustrations the most frequently at 17% of the time. They asked questions about labeling pictures 9% of the time and cloze task questions 8% of the time. Questions for engaging children, locating objects, about text and print, for drawing attention, and about counting occurred less than 5% of the time (See Figure 4).

*Sub-categories of decontextualized questions produced by SLPs*

The most frequently asked decontextualized question by SLPs were questions about inferencing, explanations, and/or solutions (25%). Questions about general knowledge, summarizing, synthesizing, and/or integrating, and judgment and

evaluations occurred 6% of the time. Questions about personal experiences and predictions were present 5% of the time. Questions about recalling information occurred 4% of the time (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percentages of SLPs' questions in subcategories



CQ1-locating objects

CQ2-labeling pictures

CQ3-descriptions about illustrations

CQ4-texts and print

CQ5-cloze task

CQ6-counting

CQ7-drawing attention

CQ8-engaging

DCQ1-judgment/evaluation

DCQ2-general knowledge

DCQ3-connections to personal experiences

DCQ4-inferencing/explanation/solutions

DCQ5-predictions

DCQ6-summarizing/synthesizing/integrating

DCQ7-recalling information

### *Summary of Results*

In conclusion, shared book reading between mothers and preschool children was a common activity in Taiwanese homes. Half of the 10 mothers began to read to their children around age 1 and conducted shared book reading with their child multiple times a week. Shared book reading sessions were reported to take 5 to 20 minutes in one shared book reading session by most of the mothers. In addition, a majority of the mothers read at children's bedtime. Most of the mothers reported reading picture books with their children most often and many of the mothers had their children choose what to read in their shared book reading sessions. All of the mothers read materials repetitively with their children. Regarding mothers' questions during shared book reading, 45% of mothers' questions were contextualized questions and 54% were decontextualized. The mothers asked significantly more decontextualized questions than contextualized questions during shared book reading. Among the contextualized subcategories, mothers asked questions about descriptions of illustrations the most often. In contrast, mothers asked questions about inferencing, explanations, and/or solutions most often from the decontextualized question subcategories.

Shared book reading and repetitive reading between teachers and preschool children also was a common activity in Taiwanese preschools. Most of the teachers in

this study frequently conducted shared book reading with children multiple times a week with shared book reading sessions taking 10 to 20 minutes for most of the teachers. The most often selected reading material was the picture book and most of the teachers chose materials for their shared reading sessions with children. Half of the teachers conducted activities during and after shared book reading but not prior to shared book reading. With respect to preschool teachers' questions during shared book reading, 43% of teachers' questions were contextualized and 57% were decontextualized. Teachers' decontextualized questions did not significantly differ from contextualized questions during shared book reading. Teachers were most likely to ask contextualized questions about descriptions of illustrations and decontextualized questions about inferencing, explanation, and/or solutions.

SLPs' also commonly used shared book reading with preschoolers in intervention sessions. Also, repetitive reading was a common practice for SLPs. Most of the SLPs in this study frequently conducted shared book reading with children multiple times a week. Some of the SLPs conducted shared book reading more than once a day. Shared book reading sessions were reported to take 10 to 20 minutes by most of the SLPs. The most often selected reading material was a picture book and most of the SLPs chose materials for their shared reading sessions with children. Half of the SLPs conducted activities prior to, during, and after shared book reading. Of all

the SLPs' extratextual questions, 45% were contextualized questions and 55% were decontextualized. The difference between contextualized questions and decontextualized questions during shared book reading was not significant. The most often asked contextualized question was about descriptions of illustrations and the most often asked decontextualized question was about inferencing, explanations, and/or solutions.

### Discussion

According to social-interactionist theory, language acquisition occurs in the context of interactions between adults and children. Shared book reading provides this setting of interaction for children to acquire knowledge of and proficiency in oral and written language. Shared book reading has been suggested as having a positive impact on children's language development (Dickinson, Griffith, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2012). The purpose of this study was to explore Taiwanese mothers', preschool teachers', and SLPs' shared book reading practices with preschoolers. According to previous studies (Chang & Lin, 2006; Wu, 2007; Zucker et al., 2010), it was predicted that Taiwanese mothers would ask more contextualized questions than decontextualized questions and Taiwanese preschool teachers would ask more decontextualized questions than contextualized questions during shared book reading.

The findings of Taiwanese mothers', preschool teachers', and SLPs in this study are discussed and compared with studies in Taiwan and in European-American culture.

*Research Question 1- Taiwanese Mothers' Shared Book Reading Practices*

Previous studies have shown that the age at which parents begin to read to children is important to children's language growth (Debaryshe, 1993; Karrass & Braungart-Rieker, 2005). Children begin to benefit when regular reading begins as early as 8 months (Dickinson et al., 2012). Most of the Taiwanese mothers in this study started to read to their children at around the age of 1 to 2 years. Only a few mothers reported starting reading to children under the age of 1 year. Previous studies indicated that Taiwanese parents read to their children before the age of 5 or before entering school (Chou, 2002; Zhou & Salili, 2008); thus, this is the first study to learn that reading begins quite early in the homes of some Taiwanese children, especially those whose mothers have high levels of education (i.e., bachelor's and master's degrees). Recent studies of Taiwanese mothers have found a strong correlation between maternal education and literacy beliefs related to reading aloud with their preschoolers (Wu & Honig, 2010). Taiwanese mothers with higher education levels reported reading more with their children (Wu & Honig, 2010).

The most fundamental issue relating to the impact of reading on children is reading frequency or how often reading takes place (Dickinson et al., 2012). Bus et al.,



(1995) reported that the frequency of shared book reading during the preschool years accounted for about 8% of the variance in children's later literacy achievement.

Researchers have found that mothers' reports of reading daily relate to children's later vocabulary and language comprehension abilities (Raikes, Brooks-Gunn, et. al., 2006).

In the present study, Taiwanese mothers reported reading to their child multiple times a week. This finding is consistent with the results of Wu and Honig (2010) who found that 46% of mothers reported reading 1-2 times a week and 42% reported reading aloud to their preschoolers at bedtime. Twenty-five percent of the mothers surveyed in Wu and Honig (2010) did not read to their preschool children, which was inconsistent with the finding in the current study. However, Wu and Honig included mothers with both low and high education levels and this may account for this difference.

Three mothers, or 30% of the sample in the present study read daily to their children compared to 3% who read daily and 8% who read at bedtime each night in Wu and Honig (2010). Although the frequency of shared book reading is important to children's later language and literacy achievement, the quality and styles of shared book reading are rather crucial to measure. Not only the number of time the mothers read, but also how they read with their children impacts children's language and

literacy learning. Future studies need to examine how Taiwanese mothers read with their children.

This study presented the first result of Taiwanese mothers' duration of shared book reading with preschoolers which indicated that mothers with high educational background reported reading for 5 to 20 minutes. Children's age might have influenced the duration of mothers' shared book reading. Although 2 children were 3 year olds, the mean age (i.e., 4year and 5 months old) of children who had mothers reading with them for 5 to 10 minutes and 10 to 15 minutes (i.e., mothers 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10) is older than the children (mean age = 3y 7 months old) of mothers (i.e., mothers 3, 4, 7, and 8) who read 15 to 20 minutes and 35 to 40 minutes. Previous studies have found that parents' talking changes when children grow older. Parents might decrease their extratextual talk and increase their cognitive demanding talk when children get close to 6 or 7 of age (De Temple & Snow, 1996; Sulzby & Teale, 1987). Parents might be more likely to read simply text than provide extratextual talk with older children and therefore might decrease the duration of shared book reading. Also, older children might be more likely to read or look at pictures and tell the story on their own instead of reading with their mothers compared to younger children. Therefore, mothers might decrease the time reading with them and expect them to read or look at the books on their own.

Exposure to various genres is important because there is growing evidence that the genre of a book shared with children can have a dramatic impact on the resulting interactions with the text. According to social-interactionist theory, learning occurs when children interact with adults and peers in social contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). Shared book reading provides the social context for children to interact with oral and written language. A variety of texts provide different types of language enriched contexts and foster different types of learning (Anderson et al., 2004). Researchers suggest that a diverse genre regimen is important for facilitating children's comprehension skills, vocabulary development, and domain knowledge (Donovan & Smolkin, 2001; Pappas, 2006; van Kleeck, 2003). The three most often selected types of book were picture book, story book, and information book. Only a few mothers reported reading materials of 4 other categories (i.e., moral stories, rhyming songs, children's poem, and myth). Most of the Taiwanese children's shared reading experiences might be categorized as narrative books (i.e., picture books and story books). To the authors knowledge there have not been previous reports of the types of books that have been read most often by mothers to their preschool children in Taiwan, thus there is currently no comparison.

An unexpected result in the current study was the low number of mothers who reported the use of moral stories being read to their children. Previous studies have

reported that Chinese and Taiwanese parents provide moral lessons in their family narratives (Fung, Miller, & Lin, 2004). Wu and Honig (2010) studied Taiwanese mothers of 3 to 5 year olds from middle class homes and found that mothers believed children gain moral knowledge from shared book reading. However, the mothers' educational levels were varied (i.e., 39% had a high school degree, 27% had college education, and 28% had a bachelor's degree or higher education) in Wu and Honig (2010). Compared to Wu and Honig, mothers in the current study had higher educational background (i.e., 70% had a master's degree and 30% had a bachelor's degree). It is possible that mothers with higher educational levels put emphasis on children's general education such as cognitive development and language development instead of moral education. This might explain why only 2 of the mothers in the current study reported reading moral stories with children. Another reason might be that moral stories are less interesting to children compared to picture books. Six of the mothers reported that their children choose reading materials for their book reading and only 1 mother reported choosing by herself. Children might be more interested in picture books due to the inviting pictures compared to moral stories and choose picture books for book reading most often. Therefore, most of the mothers did not report reading moral stories with their children.

Taiwanese parents believe that teaching moral values is important to guide and discipline their children (Luo, Snow, & Chang, 2011). They also believe that teaching moral values with concrete examples works better than teaching them in an abstract manner (Fung et al., 2004; Miller, Sandel, Lang, & Fung, 2008). Luo et al., (2011) compared the talking during shared book reading of Taiwanese mothers and American mothers and found that teaching children moral values when they have the opportunity is a strategy that was used solely by the Taiwanese mothers. However, in the current study, mothers did not provide any moral lessons during shared book reading. Compared to Luo et al., (2011), the lack of examples of opportunity education in this current study might be due to the type of book used in current study. The book, *Mooncake*, was an unfamiliar book to all the participants in the current study. It might have been easier for mothers to provide a moral lesson when using a familiar book, such as the *Very Hungry Caterpillar* used in Luo et al.,(2011), than an unfamiliar book. When reading an unfamiliar book, adults might need some time to read and understand the story. They also might need to think about how to present the story to children. Therefore, they might not be able to think about how to provide moral lessons to children without prior exposure to the reading material.

### *Cross-Language Comparisons of Shared Book Reading Practices*

Language and literacy are culturally based (Hsu, 2001). Cultural differences impact how adults provide emergent literacy practices (Kato-Otani & van Kleeck, 2004; Simmons & Johnston, 2006; Yarosz & Barnett, 2001). How cultural differences might impact shared book reading practices can be addressed by comparing the findings in the current study to the ones in previous European-American studies. These similarities and differences of shared book reading practices between Taiwanese culture and European-American culture are beneficial for professionals and clinicians to modify their shared book reading approaches when working with children and family from Taiwanese culture. Most of the Taiwanese mothers in this study began to read to their children at a slightly later age compared to that of European-American parents who begin to read to their children at 6-7 months of age (Burgess et al., 2002; Phillips and Lonigan, 2009). In both of the European-American studies, the parents were middle class. In Burgess et al.,(2002), it was not specified what the education level was, thus a direct comparison cannot be made with the current study. In Phillips and Lonigan (2009), parents had a high school education level on average (i.e., 14 years of education) and the range was 2 years to 26 years. In the current study, 7 mothers had a master's degree and 3 mothers had a bachelor's degree. Except for cultural differences, maternal education might also impact how

early mothers read to their children. Regarding cultural differences, the reason that Taiwanese mothers may read to their children at a later point in development compared to European-American parents may be due to the different purposes of shared book reading in Taiwanese and European-American cultures. It has been reported that European-American mothers generally view shared book reading as a means to foster enjoyment of reading (Senechal & LeFevre, 2001). In contrast, Chinese parents strongly believe in the importance of their role as the teachers of their children, thus, during shared book reading parents focus on transmitting knowledge, skills, and information to the child (Chao, 1994; Zhou, 2002). Luo et al.,(2012) also found that Taiwanese mothers showed the tendency to teach their children about names, colors, and numbers of objects during shared reading. Taiwanese mothers might think 6-7 month-old-infants are too young to understand teaching during shared book reading. Therefore, Taiwanese mothers wait until their children are around age 1 to start reading to them. Similar to parents from European-American culture, Taiwanese mothers read to their children multiple times a week. However, the mothers in the current study had a higher educational level than their European-American parent comparisons (Foy & Mann, 2003; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994). It is not known how the Taiwanese mothers in this study would compare with European-American mothers from higher educational levels. It is possible that

European-American mothers with a comparable education level to the Taiwanese mothers in this study would read more frequently with their children. Previous studies have found that parental education is an important factor in shaping the home literacy environment of preschoolers (Hart & Risely, 1995; Snow, 1993; Storch & Whitehurst, 2001). Taylor (1995) found that there was a significant correlation between maternal education and family activities such as the type and frequency of reading. Compared to mothers with low education levels, mothers with high education levels might put more emphasis on children's language and literacy learning and therefore read with their children more frequently.

In European-American culture, the three most often selected types of book were classic, fiction, and information books. Kato-Otani (2003) surveyed 94 college educated mothers of 3 to 5 year olds in the US from middle-class families. The results showed that 94% of the mothers reported that they read classics with their preschoolers, 84% of the mothers reported that they read fiction, and 82% of the mothers reported that they read information books. Similar to European-American mothers, Taiwanese mothers read more narrative books than information books to their children. However, compared to mothers in Kato-Otani (2003), a lower percentage (i.e., 40%) of Taiwanese mothers reported reading information books during shared book reading.



*Research Question 2- Decontextualized and Contextualized Question Use of*

*Mothers' During Shared Book Reading*

Contrary to predictions, mothers asked significantly more decontextualized questions than contextualized questions during shared book reading. Because decontextualized language has been documented to be important for children's reading and listening comprehension abilities in studies of European-American children (Zucker et al., 2010), the mothers' use of significantly more decontextualized questions during shared book reading may be beneficial for their children's later reading and listening skills. This finding is different from the results of a previous study for European-American mothers and Taiwanese mothers (Chang & Lin, 2006) which found that contextualized questions were produced more often than decontextualized questions. One of the reasons for the different result might have been the different educational levels of mothers. Maternal education has been associated with more frequent book reading (Lyytinen, Laasko, & Poikkeus, 1998; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994) and the number of books children owned at home (Feitelson & Goldstein, 1986). These studies showed that mothers with different education backgrounds might have different shared book reading practices. It is possible that mothers with higher education levels have different talking styles during shared book reading compared to mothers with lower educational levels. In Chang

and Lin (2006), only one of the mothers had a college degree, 7 mothers finished high school, 5 mothers finished junior high school, and 2 mothers finished elementary school. In contrast, in the current study, all mothers had college degrees (7 had a master's degree and 3 had a bachelor's degree). The mothers with higher educational levels might be more aware of facilitating their children's language and cognitive development during shared book reading than mothers with lower educational levels. Decontextualized questions require children to use their language skills of inferencing and analyzing to infer or abstract information to answer questions (Zuckeret al., 2010). For children, these questions are more cognitively demanding than contextualized questions. Therefore, mothers with higher educational levels might ask more decontextualized questions to give opportunities for their children to practice their decontextualized language skills compared to mothers with lower educational levels. Also, maternal educational levels have been addressed associated with children's language development (Dollaghan, Campbell, Paradise, Feldman, Janosky, Pitcairn, & Kurs-Lasky, 1999). Children from homes with mothers with low educational levels might have low language skills. Mothers with low educational levels might ask more contextualized questions during shared book reading to match their children's language levels.

Another factor that might have led to the dissimilar result from Chang and Lin (2006) is that the reading material selected for the current study was different. Zucker et al., (2010) also observed significant sequential associations for contextualized text being likely to elicit contextualized questions and unlikely to elicit decontextualized questions. In Chang and Lin (2006), mothers read the book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, to their children; whereas in the current study, mothers read the book, *Mooncake*, to their children. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* follows a set syntactic structure using a highly predictable language pattern and presents a very simple story line (Luo et al., 2011). The story plot of *the Very Hungry Caterpillar* is that the caterpillar keeps eating everyday during the week. He eats many things resulting in a stomach ache. At the end, he made a cocoon and became a beautiful butterfly. In *Mooncake*, the story plot is that Bear wanted to eat the moon. First he tried to shoot the arrow at the moon, but it didn't work. And then he worked very hard and built a rocket ship to go to the moon. He began the countdown to takeoff but he fell asleep. After he woke up he thought he was on the moon. He saw his own paw prints but he thought they might be a monster. He got scared and began the countdown again to go back. He then fell asleep again and woke up thinking he went back to the earth. At the end, Bear thought he went to the moon and had tasted the delicious moon. Compared to *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, the book, *Mooncake*, has

a more complicated story plot and requires children's inferencing skills to understand the story and might provide more opportunities for decontextualized questions. When sharing a complicated story plot, mothers want their children to understand the story content. Instead of telling them the answers, mothers might want their children to think about what happened in the story to comprehend the content. Therefore, mothers might ask more decontextualized questions to facilitate children's thinking so they can figure it out themselves. The mothers in the current study might have asked more decontextualized questions in order to help their children make inferences and better understand the story.

Mothers asked decontextualized questions about inferencing, explanations, and solutions the most during shared book reading. It has been suggested in previous studies that Chinese and Taiwanese mothers utilize shared book reading as a teaching opportunity instead of a sharing enjoyment with children (Chao, 1994; Zhou, 2002; Luo et al., 2011). Chinese mothers view engaging in home literacy activities, such as shared book reading, as a preparation for primary school or as support for preschool literacy teaching (Li & Rao, 2000). It may be that in order to teach children knowledge, mothers in the current study tended to explain the story plot and help children understand the content of the story by asking children decontextualized

questions. The following are two examples of mothers asking decontextualized

questions to facilitate their children's understanding of the story.

Mother: And then Bird asked Bear, "Did you go to the moon?"

Mother: Did he go?

Mother: Guess if Bear go to the moon or not?

Child : No.

Mother: No.

Mother: Actually **what** was the moon he ate?

Mother: **What** was it?

Child: Winter.

Mother: **What** in winter?

Mother: **What** was falling in winter?

Child: That I don't xxx.

Mother: Snow.

Mother: There was so much so much snow on the ground.

Child: Snow.

In these examples, the mother asked questions to help the child understand that Bear did not go to the moon and the mooncake Bear ate was actually snow.

### *Research Question 3: Taiwanese Teachers' Shared Book Reading Practices*

Researchers have recommended including shared book reading as a regular part of a preschool curriculum because shared book reading has been suggested to be beneficial to children's language development and emergent literacy skills (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Dickinson et al., 2012). Half of the teachers reported setting a definite time to read to children at preschools. This finding suggests that there is no definite scheduled time for some of the preschool teachers to read during their day.

Teachers appear to read to children when they have time, and between activities. This indicates that teachers might read when transiting activities during children's waiting time to keep them occupied.

To the author's knowledge, the current study is the first to address how frequently and how long Taiwanese preschool teachers read with children. Most of the Taiwanese preschool teachers read multiple times a week and 50% of the teachers read daily with children. Although shared book reading is a common activity in Taiwanese preschools, not all the teachers read daily. In Taiwanese preschools, teachers might need to spend time teaching children English (i.e., English letter and short phrases), math (i.e., numbers, counting, and addition), and reading and writing Chinese phonetic symbols. Liu (2006) reported that many preschool teachers teach children how to write to fulfill parental expectation. In Lin (2002), 97% of the preschools/kindergartens provided English teaching for children. This might be the reason that teachers do not have time to conduct shared book reading daily or more than once a day. Over half of the teachers read 10 to 20 minutes during their shared book reading.

The finding that teachers selected picture books as reading materials the most often was consistent with the finding that teachers owned mostly picture books in their classroom (Huang, 2002). In Huang (2002), teachers reported the factors they

considered when selecting books included developmental appropriateness (88.2%), expanding life experiences (76.5%), relations to lesson themes (69.6%), and children's interests (67.6%). However, whether this is why picture books were selected most often in the current study is not known.

It was somewhat expected that moral stories would be read to children; however the extent to which they would be selected by teachers was not known. Forty percent of the teachers reported selecting moral stories to read aloud to preschoolers. This might indicate that some Taiwanese teachers value children's moral education and try to provide moral lessons during shared book reading. Previous studies have found that Taiwanese parents believe that teaching moral values is important to guide and discipline their children (Luo et al., 2011). Taiwanese teachers might have the same beliefs and try to discipline children by telling moral stories. In this current study, one example of teaching a moral lesson was used by one teacher and is as follows:

Teacher: And then he didn't want to go too far.

Teacher: Because he was afraid he would get lost.

Teacher: If you went to somewhere you don't know, would you go very very far?

Child: No.

Teacher: This way your mom can't find you.

Teacher: And you might not know the way and would get lost too, right?

Child: Um.

When the teacher talked about the character that was afraid to get lost, she taught the child not to go too far to an unfamiliar place because adults might not be able to find the child. The teacher tried to discipline the child by providing a moral lesson during shared book reading.

Teachers read a wide variety of text types from picture books, to story books, information books and moral stories. Exposure to different genres of books especially, informational books, has been recommended to increase children's use of higher-level language (e.g., observational comparisons, causal chains, explanations), as well as support children's development of general literacy knowledge and subject matter knowledge (Duke & Kays, 1998; Teale, 2003; Palincsar & Duke, 2004; Pappas, 2006; Varelas & Pappas, 2006). More specifically, shared book reading of science information books may help children become familiar with scientific terms, which may serve to support children's learning of scientific concepts (Donovan & Smolkin, 2002). In Huang (2002), most of the Taiwanese teachers believed they can improve children's language abilities (95.1%), develop their creativity and imagination (81.4%), and foster their reading habits (80.4%) by reading to them. Teachers might need to read a variety of book genres to meet their goals for children.

*Teachers' Activities Prior to, During, and After Shared Book Reading*



Activities prior to, during, and after shared book reading are critical because they extend the context of shared book reading for children to interact with adults and language which is consistent with the learning theory of Vygotsky (1978). Moreover, adults can use activities prior to and during shared book reading to engage children in shared book reading. Keeping children actively participated in and be interested in shared book reading is an important element for ideal shared book reading (Ezell & Justice, 2005).

Researchers have suggested that to promote children's comprehension, teachers should: (1) activate children's background knowledge, (2) help them make predictions, and (3) to find a purpose for shared book reading (i.e., talk about what children want to know about the book) prior to shared book reading. During shared book reading, teachers should: (1) help children visualizing the content, (2) make connections to children's personal experiences or to other books, and (3) ask questions about the book. After book reading, teachers should: (1) encourage children to make comments, judgments, and evaluations about the book and (2) help children summarize, synthesize, and retell the book (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; Santoro, Chard, Howard, & Baker, 2008; Scharlach, 2008).

Most of the teachers in the current study conducted activities during and after shared book reading, but only a few reported activities prior to shared book reading

sessions. Prior to shared book reading, activities reported by a few or some of the teachers included: telling some of the story plot, making predictions, and showing some pictures of the book. These activities are consistent with the previous suggestions about things to do to promote children's comprehension prior to share book reading (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; Santoro, Chard, Howard, & Baker, 2008; Scharlach, 2008). Teachers told part of the story plot and showed some of the pictures to activate children's background knowledge and helped them make predictions.

During shared book reading, reported activities included: using materials, pictures, or finger puppets to present the story, practicing making sentences, sharing related experiences, connecting the story to lesson units and role playing. Again, teachers did some of the activities as suggested such as using materials and pictures and role play to visualize the content. Also, teachers made connections to personal experiences and lesson units. After shared book reading, activities reported including: conducting group discussion, sharing related past experiences, asking questions to review the story, retelling the story, practicing making sentences, connecting story to lesson units, and art activities. Teachers' activities followed some of the suggestions discussed earlier such as retelling and summarizing the story. Some of the results were similar to the activities after book reading reported in Tseng (2002). She found that the Taiwanese preschool teachers in her study reported relating texts to children's real

experiences, to retell the book, and to discuss the content of the book. The current study adds to the literature by describing additional strategies that Taiwanese preschool teachers use to promote language and literacy during shared reading.

### *Cross-Language Comparisons of Shared Book Reading Practices*

Across European-American and Taiwanese cultures, there were differences and similarities in the preschool teacher responses. In some instances, there were no previous European-American studies to make comparisons. Similarities were present in types of books that were selected by teachers to be read. For instance, Taiwanese preschool teachers read more narrative books than information books as do preschool teachers in Head Start programs in the United States (Pentimonti, et al., 2011). Pentimonti et al., (2011) found that 85% of the teachers' reading materials in preschool classrooms were narrative books and 5.4% were information books.

Differences were present in the duration of shared reading conducted by preschool teachers with children. The most often reported range for Taiwanese preschool teachers for shared reading was 10-20 minutes. In a European-American study, preschool teachers read for approximately 9 minutes with a range from three and a half to 15 minutes (Hindman et al., 2008). However, teachers in this study reported a range of time instead of exact time and thus the result is not comparable to European-American studies. Future studies should be conducted to observe teachers'

shared book reading in their classroom to present the exact duration of reading. Early et al., (2010) found that teachers spent 5% of the time during the day time reading with children and might indicate that teachers read daily with preschoolers. In the current study, half of the teachers read more than once a day or daily which is less frequent compared to European-American teachers. This difference might due to that shared book reading became prevalent in Taiwan later compared to the US (Chang & Lin 2006). Also, preschool teachers might need to spend time on other teaching activities such as English education (Lin, 2002) and Chinese writing (Liu, 2006). These might be the factors that cause the differences of reading frequency between Taiwanese teachers and teachers in the US.

*Research Question 4: Decontextualized and Contextualized Question Use of Teachers' During Shared Book Reading*

Contrary to predictions, there was no significant difference between the number of decontextualized questions and contextualized questions produced by Taiwanese preschool teachers asked more during shared book reading. However, a medium effect size was present. A greater number of participants may have resulted in a significant result given this effect size. Only two teachers did not produce more decontextualized than contextualized questions, Teacher 9 and Teacher 10. Both teachers read to the youngest children, who were in the three year old age range and

both teachers had Bachelor's degrees. The only other teacher who read to a three year old had a Master's degree and this may be why she used more decontextualized questions compared to her colleagues. Previous studies have shown that children's age influences parents' and teachers' talking styles during shared book reading. Researchers have found that when children get close to school age, parents decrease their extratextual talk (Goodsitt, Raitan, & Perlmutter, 1988; Sulzby & Teale, 1987) but at the same time increase their cognitively demanding talk (De Temple & Snow, 1996). Price et al., (2012) found that preschool teachers were less likely to read the entire texts, read for shorter period of time, and used extratextual utterances more often with 3-year old children in their class compared to 4- or 5-year-old children in their class.

Teachers' educational levels also impact their interactions with children during shared book reading. Price et al. (in press) have reported that preschool teachers with more college education use more cognitively demanding language during shared book reading, including decontextualized talk. However, in both studies, comparisons were made between teachers with high school, associate's degrees, and bachelor's degrees. Unfortunately, no studies have examined teachers with bachelors compared with teachers with master's degrees to determine if those with higher degrees would use more decontextualized talk with older preschool children. Thus, research to date

suggests that the age of child and teacher's level of education may have worked together to impact the results. Future studies with a larger number of participants should be undertaken to address this possibility.

Among the subcategories of questions, the teachers asked questions about inferencing, explanations, and solutions most often. Teachers may have asked these questions to help children understand the content of the story. For example, one teacher asked, "Why were they building the rocket ship?" and may have expected the child to know that Bear was building the rocket ship because he was going to the moon. In this example, the teacher used this decontextualized question about explanation to facilitate and to test the child's comprehension of the story plot. Recall that the second most asked question was contextual and about the description of illustrations. Teachers tended to use pictures as a prompt to explain the story plot to the child. Also, they asked questions about illustrations to elicit story telling from the child. For example, one teacher pointed to the picture and asked, "What happened to Bear," to lead the child to tell the event in the story. The third most often used subcategory of questions was contextualized and focused on the teacher labeling the pictures. It may be that the teachers asked this type of question to teach children the name of an object or action in the illustration or to test the child's vocabulary. The fourth most often used question was a decontextualized question about general

knowledge. It may be that teachers asked this type of question to teach children general information such as weather and animal behavior in different seasons. For example, one teacher asked, “What season does it snow?” and expected the child to respond and understand that it snows in winter.

In European-American culture, Zucker et al., (2010) examined shared book reading sessions of preschool teachers. Forty-four percent of the teachers had a bachelor’s or a master’s degree and 44% had some college education or a two-year associate’s degree. They found that preschool teachers in Head Start classrooms produced decontextualized questions 57.2% of the time during shared book reading; however, the number of decontextualized questions did not differ significantly from contextualized questions (Zucker et al., 2010). Compared to Zucker et al., (2010), the teachers in the current study had a higher educational level (i.e., 90% of the teachers had a bachelor’s and 10% had a master’s degree). Despite this, the results from the current study and Zucker et al, 2010 were quite similar in terms of the percent of decontextualized questions asked. This finding suggests that Taiwanese children might have similar shared book reading experiences as European-American children at preschools regarding the amount and types of questions received.

### *Research Question 5- SLPs' Shared Book Reading Practices*

This is the first study to the author's knowledge to study Taiwanese SLP's use of shared book reading with Taiwanese preschool children with SLI. Shared book reading is commonly used in Taiwanese SLPs' intervention and 80% of the SLPs read multiple times a week and for 10-20 minutes as part of intervention. Although most of the SLPs often conducted shared book reading in their interventions, none of the SLPs in the current study reported applying dialogic reading (Whitehurst et al., 1994) with their clients. This might due to the lack of studies examining the dialogic reading approach with Taiwanese children. Only four types of books were selected by the SLPs to use during shared reading. Two types of books, picture books and story books, were selected by all the SLPs. All the SLPs selected picture book as the most often read material. One explanation picture books were selected so frequently may be because SLPs might try to provide visual supports for children to understand and to attend the story. Picture books allow children to listen to the SLP's talking and to see the pictures in the book to understand the story. Another explanation is that SLPs may prefer to read narrative books (i.e., picture book and story books). The goals of many SLPs' shared book reading were to promote children's narrative skills, story retelling skills, and oral expressive language. SLPs might select narrative books to model narrative structure and to have children practice retelling story skills. No SLPs



reported reading information books with children. As earlier stated, informational books are beneficial for children's language learning because they have been found to promote children's higher-level language (e.g., observational comparisons, causal chains, explanations) and facilitate children's general literacy knowledge and subject-matter knowledge (Duke & Kays, 1998; Palincsar & Duke, 2004; Pappas, 2006; Varelas & Pappas, 2006).

The other two types of books that were selected by SLPs were moral stories (30%) and rhyming songs (20%). Moral stories might be used to teach children about right and wrong. According to the report of one SLP, she used shared book reading to accomplish goals to improve a child's behavior regularity and social rule learning. The use of moral stories could be used for this purpose. Rhyming songs were selected by only 20% of the SLPs. Rhyming is one of the early activities used to promote children's phonological awareness and phonological awareness has been documented to be strongly related to children's language and literacy achievements (Bus & van IJzendoorn, 1999). Researchers have found that children's ability to discriminate homophonic characters predicted reading success and children's onset-rime awareness predicted their Chinese reading ability (Siok & Fletcher, 2001), and that the ability to hear and compare rhymes has been suggested as predictors of growth of early reading skills in Chinese (Ho & Bryant, 1997). Further, McBride-Chang and Ho (2000) found

that Chinese phonological awareness predicted Chinese character recognition. These studies have shown the importance of phonological awareness in Chinese language and reading development. However, based on the Taiwanese SLPs' reports, promoting children's phonological awareness skills was not a goal when conducting shared book reading. This may be why selecting rhyming books was not a frequent choice for Taiwanese SLPs for their shared book reading interventions.

#### *SLPs' Activities Prior to, During, and After Shared Book Reading*

Children's active participation in and being interested in shared book reading are critical elements during shared book reading (Ezell & Justice, 2005). Most of the SLPs conducted activities after shared book reading and some of the SLPs conducted activities prior to and during shared book reading sessions. Prior to shared book reading, activities reported by a few or some of the SLPs included: sharing experiences related to the story with children, introducing the characters, objects, and events in the story, and having children play with some toys related to the story. SLPs reported the following activities during shared book reading: matching/manipulating picture, playing extended games related to the story, connecting the story to related past experiences, coloring, painting, drawing pictures, imitating sounds and/or actions of the characters in the story, and demonstrating story plot or concept with materials. After shared book reading, SLPs reported: matching pictures, drawing, painting,

coloring pictures, sharing past experiences related to the story, retelling the story, asking questions related to the story, discussing story content as a group, and role playing the story.

Taiwanese SLPs conduct some similar and some different activities prior to, during, and after shared book reading compared to European-American SLPs. Some similar activities have been found in European-American studies including discussing story content as a group, retelling the story after reading (Morrow, 1993), role playing, connecting text to personal experiences, and art activities (Gunning, 2008). However, some activities suggested during and after shared book reading in European-American studies, such as webbing and mapping, graphic presentations for categorizing and structuring information, were not reported by Taiwanese SLPs in the current study.

Increasing children's vocabulary was reported as goals of shared book reading for 40% of the SLPs. Some researchers suggest that to promote children's vocabulary learning, professionals and SLPs should select targeted vocabulary prior to book reading and introduce and discuss these words during shared book reading (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002). However, none of the SLPs in the current study reported conducting activities such as selecting and introducing vocabulary prior to or during shared book reading. It may be that some SLPs in Taiwan used this method, but

did not report it. Further studies are needed to investigate how vocabulary is targeted using shared book reading by Taiwanese SLPs.

*Research Question 6- Decontextualized and Contextualized Question Use of SLPs'*

*During Shared Book Reading*

No predictions were made as to whether Taiwanese SLPs would ask more decontextualized questions or more contextualized questions because there had not been previous studies conducted in this area prior to the current study. The amounts of these types of questions examined in the current study provide the information about children's language learning contexts during shared book reading. In this current study, although the amounts of contextualized questions and decontextualized questions were not significantly different, the medium effect size indicated a meaningful difference between the two types of questions. A larger sample size in future studies may result in statistically significant results.

The children's age might have impacted SLPs' use of question type during shared book reading. All the SLPs who asked more contextualized than decontextualized questions (i.e., SLPs 2, 3, 9 & 10) read to children who were 3 year olds compared to other children who were 4 and 5 year olds. SLPs might not expect 3 year olds to answer decontextualized questions and therefore decreased their use of decontextualized questions. However, one SLP (i.e., SLP 7) who also read to a 3 year

old asked more decontextualized than contextualized questions. The goals of this SLP reported for children were comprehending the story content and answering questions related to the story. These goals might indicate that the SLP targets children's ability to answer questions about comprehending the story which might involve thinking and processing what happens in the story. This might be the reason that she used more decontextualized than contextualized questions to promote children's thinking such as making inferences.

Among all the subcategories of questions, SLPs asked questions about inferencing, explanations, and solutions the most. A majority of the SLPs reported improving children's comprehension as their goal of shared book reading. Taiwanese SLPs might ask these decontextualized questions to facilitate children's comprehension of the story and to explain the story plot to children. The second most asked question was a contextualized question that requested descriptions of the book illustrations. Taiwanese SLPs often asked questions about the pictures to elicit children's descriptive language. For example, one SLP pointed to the picture and asked, "What happened to his rocket ship?" and expected the child to describe the event of the rocket ship falling down. Another SLP showed the picture of the cover page and asked, "What do you see?" and expected the child to describe the picture.

Pictures also served as prompts for children to understand the story. The following is

an example of an SLP asking questions about the picture to explain the event:

SLP: Right, he wanted to shoot the spoon to the moon so that what he can eat?

Child: Moon.

SLP: Turned out did it work?

Child: No.

SLP: The moon is too far away.

SLP: It had not reached the moon but just~

SLP: Where did the spoon fall?

SLP: Into the water.

In this example, the SLP was trying to explain that Bear tried to shoot the moon but he did not reach the moon. The SLP then asked a question about the picture, “Where did the spoon fall?” to help the child understand the spoon did not fly to the moon but fell into the water instead. Also, the Taiwanese SLPs often referred to pictures in the story and expected children to answer questions about the attributes of an object (i.e., what color) and the action and status of the character and objects (i.e., what is he doing, is he awake).

The third most often used question was contextualized and concerned labeling objects. This finding may reflect the fact that naming objects as a method of testing vocabulary learning was a focus during Taiwanese SLPs’ shared book reading. In the current study, SLPs often asked children to name the character and objects in the pictures. Sometimes SLPs described the object in their questions instead of pointing to the object in the picture. For example, one SLP asked, “What was he using to tie it

up?” Instead of pointing to the piece of string in the picture, the SLP described the function of the object and the action of the character and expected the child to find the object in the picture and also provide the name of the object. When children learned the name of the object, they also learned the function and the description of the object so they could apply the word in different contexts. Taiwanese SLPs might use this strategy to support children’s vocabulary growth during shared book reading.

The fourth most often produced question used by SLPs was a decontextualized question about recalling information. Specifically, SLPs often asked children to recall information immediately after the SLPs provided information. An example of a question about immediately recalling information is as follows:

SLP: We need to ride on a rocket ship to the moon.

Child : To the moon.

SLP : **What** do we need to ride on?

SLP : Ride on an airplane or a rocket ship?

Child : Ride on an airplane.

In this example, the SLP provided the information about what Bear needed to ride on to go to the moon. Immediately after she provided the information to the child, she asked the child to recall the information to answer the question. This type of question seems to be a strategy that SLPs used regularly to promote children’s learning in their intervention.

In European-American culture, asking questions has been suggested in previous studies as a strategy to support children's language and literacy skills (Crown & Hoffman, 2004; Whitehurst, Epstein, Angell, Payne, Crone, & Fischel, 1994). In the present study, in Taiwanese culture, SLPs also used the strategy of asking questions during shared book reading to facilitate children's language. Improving oral expressive language was reported by most of the SLPs and improving the ability of answering questions and narrative skills were reported by some of the SLPs as their shared book reading goals. Taiwanese SLPs might ask questions to elicit children's responses of describing the events in the story. If children do not respond to the SLP's question or do not respond accurately the SLP might modify the original question and ask a new question with more support and prompts. The following is an example of an SLPs' repetition and modification of questions during shared book reading:

SLP: Where did he go?

Child: He went to buy pudding.

SLP: He went to eat pudding.

Child: Right, he went to eat pudding.

SLP: Where did he go to eat pudding?

Child: The moon.

SLP: Right, he went to the moon to eat pudding.

Child: To the moon to eat pudding.

SLP: **How** did he go to eat the pudding?

Child: To the moon to eat pudding.

SLP: **Did** he ride a motorcycle?

Child: No.

SLP: No?

SLP: Then **what did** he ride on?



Child: xxx ride.

SLP: He rode on the rocket ship.

Child: He rocket ship.

In this example, the SLP wanted to ask two major questions, “Where did Bear go,” and “How did Bear go to the moon,” to test and facilitate the child’s comprehension of the story after book reading. The SLP used 6 questions to elicit the child’s correct answers of the two major questions. This example showed how an SLP might increase their decontextualized questions about inferencing, reasoning, and synthesizing during shared book reading in order to guide the child to the correct responses. Also, an SLP asked, “How did he go to eat the pudding,” and the child did not answer the question but simply repeated part of the SLP’s utterance. Therefore, the SLP asked another question to help the child remember the content of the story. She then modified the original question of “How did he go” and asked a simplified question of “What did he ride on.” She adjusted the difficulty levels of the question so the question was less challenging for the child. Most of the SLPs reported improving children’s language comprehension was one their goals for shared book reading. Taiwanese SLPs might sequence questions from more challenging to less challenging questions to lead the children’s thinking and promote their comprehension.

### *Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Study*

Several limitations were present in the current study. First, a small number of subjects were participated in the study, limiting the power to find evidence of statistical significant differences. A large number of participants should be recruited in future studies. Further, the generalizability of the findings to all the Taiwanese mothers is limited. The group of mothers was somewhat homogeneous in education level, in that they were highly educated. Researchers have found different shared book reading practices and reading styles in mothers and preschool teachers with different educational backgrounds (Gerde & Powell, 2009; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994). Studies with mothers from different education levels are needed to determine if and how shared book reading practices may vary from the mothers in this current study. Shared book reading practices and the types of questions used during shared reading of mothers, teachers, and SLPs with different educational backgrounds should be explored in future studies to determine the effect of educational level on shared book reading. Gender differences might be another factor to consider when evaluating adults' use of questions during shared book reading and their shared book reading practices. In the current study, all the participants were female. In future research, shared book reading practices and talking during shared book reading of fathers, male

teachers, and male SLPs can be examined to address the influence of gender differences on shared book reading practices.

Moreover, only one book was used in this study. Some books might lend themselves to asking more decontextualized questions than others based on plot complexity or the lack of information provided in the pictures or text which may make it necessary for children or adults to guess at what will happen next. Further, different book genres impact adults' talking styles during shared book reading.

Researchers have found that preschool teachers used significantly greater numbers of extratextual utterances during the information book reading sessions compared to the storybook reading sessions (Price et al., 2012). The interpretations of findings in the current study were limited to narrative picture book reading. The findings cannot be generalized to the shared book reading of all types of books such as informational books. Future studies with Taiwanese children and other frequently selected books and shared reading practices would be highly informative from a developmental and a remedial perspective. In addition, more than one type of book could be provided for adults to read with children to examine if adults produce different types of talking when using different books. More challenging, inferential, adult conversation occurs with informational genres compared to narrative genres (Pellegrini, et al., 1990; Price et al. 2009) and information text was found to elicit teachers' decontextualized

questions the most (Zucker, et al., 2010). Information genres should also be selected for mothers', teachers', and SLPs' shared book reading in future studies to compare with narrative genres. Also, books that are culturally relevant to Taiwanese people and books which convey moral education should be included in future research to explore what types of talking might be elicited during shared books with cultural meaning. Yet another possible area of exploration is that of rhyming books. A small percentage of participants reported reading rhyming books with preschoolers in the current study. Previous studies have shown that phonological awareness skills are important for children's Chinese character recognition ability (McBride-Chang & Ho, 2000). Future studies should be conducted to explore if and how adults facilitate children's phonological awareness during shared book reading. Previous studies have also found that Taiwanese teachers teach children Chinese character reading and writing (Liu, 2006). It remains unknown how, when, and how often adults might reference print to children during shared book reading. Future research should be conducted to examine if and how adults teach preschoolers Chinese character recognition during share book reading.

Another limitation is that there was only one shared book reading session recorded for each adult-child dyad. Adults' use of language and questions might be different when conducting repeated shared book reading. In future research, multiple

visits for shared book reading sessions should be take place to address how adults might change their use of language and questions in repeated shared book reading and the influence of repeated shared book reading on children's language development.

Another limitation of the current study was that all the shared book reading sessions were one-on-one sessions. Taiwanese adults' use of language and questions remains unknown when reading with more than one child at the same time. In preschools, teachers often read to the whole class instead of reading with one child. In future research, shared book reading sessions with the teacher or the SLP reading to groups of children should be conducted.

In this current study, children from age 3 to 5 were recruited. The variance of age might influence adults' use of questions during shared book reading. A sufficient numbers of participants need to be included in future research so that this factor can be adequately analyzed. In future studies, a cross-sectional design with children grouped according to their age (i.e., 3 year olds as a group, 4 year olds as a group, and 5 year olds as a group) and shared book reading examined in the three different groups would exclude the variance of age difference. The differences of adults' talking during shared book reading among the three groups could be examined to address how adults might conduct shared book reading differently with children of

different ages. Children's language ability might also influence adults' types of questions during shared book reading.

In this study, children with both expressive and mixed (i.e., receptive and expressive) language impairment were recruited. The different language ability of the children might have elicited different questioning behavior from the SLPs.

Children's language outcomes should be examined in future studies to explore how adults' talking during shared book reading impacts children's language development.

In future studies, children's vocabulary size, story retelling ability, and story comprehension ability should also be evaluated to examine the influence of adults' talking during shared book reading on children's language ability. Moreover, most of the children in this current study were typically developing children. To examine the effects of book reading intervention on language abilities of children with language disorders, children who are at risk and/or with language disorders should be included in future studies. Language outcomes of children who are at risk and/or with language disorders should be evaluated prior to shared book reading and after shared book reading to determine what characteristics of shared book reading have positive influence on children's language outcome. Also, this current study only examined adults' questions during shared book reading. Other characteristics and strategies used by Taiwanese mothers, teachers, and SLPs were not addressed. In future studies,

Taiwanese mothers', teachers', and SLPs' vocabulary usage, sentence structures, print reference, and responses to children's questions during shared book reading should be studied. Mothers', teachers', and SLPs' use of strategies such as modeling, expansion, and recasting should also be examined.

Last, responses elicited from the opened ended questions on the questionnaires were sometimes difficult to compare and analyze. For teachers and SLPs, three questions about their activities prior to, during, and after shared book reading were open-ended questions. Questions should be designed differently, for example, options of the question should be provided for participants to choose from or to give a point from a scale. In this way, their responses can be compared and analyzed. Also, the question about reading material selection on the questionnaire could have been worded more carefully by including definitions of the types of books read with children such as picture books and story books. In future studies, different types of books should be presented for participants to choose from and reported as the type of book they read with children.

Cultural differences have been shown to influence how adults provide emergent literacy practices (Kato-Otani & van Kleeck, 2004; Simmons & Johnston, 2006; Yarosz & Barnett, 2001). The results of this current study have shown some current practices of shared book reading in Taiwan which are useful for professionals and

clinicians who work with Taiwanese families and also for parents, teachers, and SLPs in Taiwan. Based on the results of this study, future research can be conducted to explore other variables of adults' shared book reading practices and talking styles during shared book reading. Moreover, how adults' practices and talking impact children's language and literacy development should be studied. Future research about shared book reading should be emphasized on how to provide effective shared book reading for promoting children's language and literacy learning. Further, future research should be conducted to present effective shared book reading intervention for children with language impairment.



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## Appendix A

### Questionnaire completed by Mothers

Background Questionnaire-Mothers

date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Mother ID

Staff Initials

#### About your child

1. Your child's birth date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ (mm/dd/yy)

2. Your child's birth order: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Your child is: ☐ Male ☐ Female

4. What language does your child speak at home?

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taiwanese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other : _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Has your child been diagnosed with any of the following?

- ☐ Language Impairment or Language Disorder
- ☐ Learning Disability
- ☐ Mental Retardation
- ☐ Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
- ☐ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ☐ Autism
- ☐ Pervasive Development Disorder
- ☐ Conduct Disorder
- ☐ Emotional Disorder (Schizophrenia, Oppositional Defiant Disorder)
- ☐ Central Auditory Processing Disorder

- ☐ Oral Motor or Neuromuscular Dysfunction
- ☐ Any other medical condition or syndrome; Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Has your child ever received speech-language services?

6. Has your child ever had hearing screening? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, did your child pass the hearing screening? ☐ Yes ☐ No

### About You

7. What language do you speak in your home?

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taiwanese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Englsih	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other : _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What was the highest level education you completed?

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Some college, but no degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Graduate degree (Master's, Ph.D., M.D., etc.)

What is your occupation?

### About literacy

1. Have you ever read the book, Mooncake, to your child? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you read books/stories with your child at home? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. How often do you **typically** read books/stories to your child at home?

- ☐ one time a day      ☐ 2- 3 times a day      ☐ more than 3 times a day
- ☐ once a week      ☐ 2-3 time a week      ☐ more than 3 time a week
- ☐ once a month      ☐ 2-3 times a month      ☐ more than 3 time a month

3. How long does each session of reading books last?

- ☐ Shorter than 5 minutes      ☐ 15-20 minutes      ☐ 30-35 minutes
- ☐ 5-10 minutes      ☐ 20-25 minutes      ☐ 35-40 minutes
- ☐ 10-15 minutes      ☐ 25-30 minutes      ☐ longer than 40 minutes

4. Who typically selects the books/stories to be read? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What kind of books do you read with your child (Check all that applies)?

- ☐ picture books      ☐ story books      ☐ information books
- ☐ rhyming books      ☐ historical books      ☐ myth stories
- ☐ children poems      ☐ comic books      ☐ horror stories
- ☐ moral stories

Which types of books do you read to your children the most?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you read the same book to your child repeatedly? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. How do you typically get your child involved in book reading?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. What age was your child when you began to read books/stories to him/her?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you have a certain time of day when you read books/stories to your child?

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, when do you read to your child during the day? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### Questionnaire completed by Preschool Teachers

Background Questionnaire-Teachers

date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Teacher ID

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Staff Initials

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#### About you and the class

1. Your gender: \_\_\_\_\_ male \_\_\_\_\_ female
2. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your educational background? (the highest educational level)  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How long have you been working as a preschool teacher? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Children's age in your class: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of children in your class: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Typically, how many teachers work with the children in the class? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What language do you speak in your class?

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Taiwanese</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other : _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About literacy

1. Have you ever read the book, Mooncake, to your student? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you read books/stories with students in your class? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. How often do you read books/stories to your students in the classroom?

- ☐multiple times a day                      ☐daily  
☐2-3 times a week                      ☐Once a week  
☐Multiple times a month                      ☐Once a month

3. How long does each session of reading books last?

- ☐Shorter than 5 minutes      ☐15-20 minutes      ☐30-35 minutes  
☐5-10 minutes      ☐20-25 minutes      ☐35-40 minutes  
☐10-15 minutes      ☐25-30 minutes      ☐40-50 minutes

4. Who typically selects the books/stories to be read? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What kind of books do you read with your students (Check all that applies)?

- ☐picture books                      ☐story books                      ☐information books  
☐rhyming books                      ☐historical books                      ☐myth stories  
☐children poems                      ☐comic books                      ☐horror stories  
☐moral stories

Which types of books do you read to your students the most?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you read the same book to your student repeatedly? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. How do you typically get your preschooler involved in book reading?

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8. Have you learned Dialogic Reading? Yes \_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

If yes, have you ever used Dialogic Reading in your class? Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you typically do any book/story activities prior to book reading? \_\_\_\_\_

If you do, what activities do you usually conduct?

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10. Do you have any activities during the book reading session? \_\_\_\_\_

If you do, what activities do you usually conduct?

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11. Do you have any follow-up activities after the book reading session? \_\_\_\_\_

If you do, what activities do you usually conduct?

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12. Do you have a certain time of day when you read books/stories to children in your class?

If yes, when do you read to your child during the day? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Questionnaire completed by SLPs

Background Questionnaire-SLPs

date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

SLP ID

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Staff Initials

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#### About you and the clients

1. Gender? Male \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_
2. What is your educational background? (the highest educational level)  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How long have you been working as a speech-language pathologist?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Where do you work? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Age of your clients: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of your clients aged from 3 to 5: \_\_\_\_\_
7. What language do you speak in your sessions?

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taiwanese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other : _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### About Literacy Practice

1. Have you ever read the book, Mooncake, to your clients? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Do you read books/stories with your clients in your sessions?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How often do you **typically** use books/stories in your sessions?

☐multiple times a day

☐daily

☐2-3 times a week

☐Once a week

☐Multiple times a month

☐Once a month

3. How long does each session of reading books last?

☐Shorter than 5 minutes

☐15-20 minutes

☐30-35 minutes

☐5-10 minutes

☐20-25 minutes

☐35-40 minutes

☐10-15 minutes

☐25-30 minutes

☐40-50 minutes

4. Who typically selects the books/stories to be read? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What kind of books do you read with your clients? Give the percentage.

\_\_\_\_picture books

\_\_\_\_story books

\_\_\_\_information books

\_\_\_\_rhyming books

\_\_\_\_historical books

\_\_\_\_myth stories

\_\_\_\_children poems

\_\_\_\_comic books

\_\_\_\_horror stories

\_\_\_\_ moral stories

6. Do you read the same book repeatedly to your client? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

7. How do you typically get the children involved in book reading?

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8. Have you ever learned Dialogic Reading? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, have you ever used Dialogic Reading with your client? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you typically have any book/story activities prior to book reading?

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If you do, what activities do you usually conduct?

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10. Do you have any follow-up activities during the book reading session?

---

If you do, what activities do you usually conduct?

---

---

11. Do you have any follow-up activities after the book reading session?

---

If you do, what activities do you usually conduct?

---

---

12. What are the goals do you usually set for your preschoolers when using books in the sessions?

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## Appendix D

### Activities Conducted by Preschool Teachers

#### Activities prior shared book reading

Teacher 1	Tell some of the story plot to draw attention and motivation.
Teacher 2	NA
Teacher 3	Have children predict the story plot. Show the pictures and design of the book.
Teacher 4	NA
Teacher 5	NA
Teacher 6	NA
Teacher 7	NA
Teacher 8	NA
Teacher 9	Ask questions
Teacher 10	NA

#### Activities during shared book reading

Teacher 1	Use materials to present or demonstrate. Sometimes ask children to role play and demonstrate.
Teacher 2	Use materials or pictures to present and demonstrate. Connect the story to lecture topic, example: teaching brushing teeth.
Teacher 3	Discuss the content of the story with children and ask children to share their experiences related to the story.
Teacher 4	Extended activities that related the story plot. Example: ask children to imagine how the character in the story acts and demonstrate.
Teacher 5	Use finger puppet to tell the story and interact with children.
Teacher 6	NA
Teacher 7	Interactive activities Ask children to imagine the content of the story and respond to teachers' questions.
Teacher 8	When reading a familiar book, tell the story differently from the original story plot and see if children can indicate the differences.
Teacher 9	Ask questions or ask children to imitate the characters.
Teacher 10	Have children learn the simple syntax in the book and practice making sentences.

---

Activities after shared book reading

---

Teacher 1	NA
Teacher 2	Connect the story to related lesson unit. Activities can be related to dancing, music, cognition, and language.
Teacher 3	Games or art that related to the story.
Teacher 4	NA
Teacher 5	Group discussion about story plot.
Teacher 6	NA
Teacher 7	Group games or small group games. Art activities.
Teacher 8	Ask questions and review the story content. Ask children to retell the story Ask children to role play the story.
Teacher 9	Group discussion Assignment sheet
Teacher 10	Have children learn the simple syntax in the book and practice making sentences.

---

## Appendix E

### Activities Conducted by SLPs

#### Activities prior shared book reading

SLP 1	Share experiences
SLP 2	NA
SLP 3	Connect to and share past experiences. Discuss and introduce characters, objects, and events related to the book.
SLP 4	NA
SLP 5	Briefly present the context of the story to elicit children's curiosity.
SLP 6	Ask questions about the main characters of the story.
SLP 7	NA
SLP 8	NA
SLP 9	NA
SLP 10	Play with toys that related to the story. Have discussion about the story.

#### Activities during shared book reading

SLP 1	Pictures matching Coloring/painting/drawing
SLP 2	NA
SLP 3	Share past experiences Use picture cards to interact with children.
SLP 4	NA
SLP 5	Design extended games or role play that related to the story plot.
SLP 6	Play games with picture cards. Imitate the sounds that might occur in the story. Example: animal sounds. Extend the context of the story.
SLP 7	NA
SLP 8	NA
SLP 9	Ask questions Ask children to do some actions or imitate sounds
SLP 10	Use materials that related to the story to demonstrate so children can understand some concepts. Example: Have children carry light things and heavy things to help them understand the concept of light and

	heavy.
Activities after shared book reading	
SLP 1	Pictures matching Coloring/painting/drawing Ask questions
SLP 2	NA
SLP 3	Share past experiences.
SLP 4	NA
SLP 5	Ask questions to help children retell the story. Answer questions the related to the story content. Discuss the content of the story. Role play.
SLP 6	Ask questions about the story content. Ask children to retell part of the story. Ask children to think about and talk about what might happen at the end if some of the details have changed.
SLP 7	Role play
SLP 8	Ask simple questions.
SLP 9	Ask questions Retell the story Role play
SLP 10	Retell the story by looking at the pictures. Have children interact with the characters in the story. Example: pretend to give something to the character of the story.

## Appendix F

### SLPs' Goals for Children when Using Shared Book Reading

SLP 1	Improve language comprehension, oral expressive language, and cognitive ability.
SLP 2	Increase new vocabulary. Use phrases and short sentences to describe events.
SLP 3	Improve language expression, comprehension, and cognition.
SLP 4	Naming/recognizing objects. Answer questions. Build the concept of cause and effect relationship. Retell story.
SLP 5	Improve children's abilities of listening, noticing, observing, and inferencing. Increase attention span. Improve listening comprehension, oral expression, and cognition. Improve turn taking skills. Behavior regularity. Learning social rules.
SLP 6	Improve listening comprehension. Search clues of the pictures to understand the story. Use certain syntax of sentences to express. Improve listening memory. Improve oral expression. Improve turn taking and waiting abilities.
SLP 7	Comprehend 70% of the story content. Answer 50% of the questions that relate to the story. Remember the main characters of the story.
SLP 8	Naming/recognizing objects. Ability to understand complicated instructions. Improve narrative skills.
SLP 9	Increase vocabulary. Increase sentence length. Improve listening comprehension.
SLP 10	Increase sentence complexity. Improve narrative skills.

---

Increase vocabulary.  
Improve listening comprehension.  
Improve inferencing ability.  
Improve problem-solving ability.

---



## Appendix G

### Mothers' Frequency of

#### Decontextualized and Contextualized Questions

	Decontextualized Questions Frequency	Contextualized Questions Frequency
Mother 1	28	39
Mother 2	23	20
Mother 3	30	27
Mother 4	15	17
Mother 5	6	4
Mother 6	16	11
Mother 7	32	21
Mother 8	13	9
Mother 9	28	22
Mother 10	18	5

## Appendix H

### Mothers' Proportion of

#### Decontextualized and Contextualized Questions

	Decontextualized Questions Frequency/Proportion	Contextualized Questions Frequency/Proportion
Mother 1	28/67=0.42	39/67=0.58
Mother 2	23/43=0.53	20/43=0.47
Mother 3	30/57=0.53	27/57=0.47
Mother 4	15/32=0.47	17/32=0.53
Mother 5	6/10=0.6	4/10=0.4
Mother 6	16/27=0.59	11/27=0.41
Mother 7	32/53=0.6	21/53=0.4
Mother 8	13/22=0.59	9/22=0.41
Mother 9	28/50=0.56	22/50=0.44
Mother 10	18/23=0.78	5/23=0.22

## Appendix I

### Preschool Teachers' Frequency of

#### Decontextualized and Contextualized Questions

	Decontextualized Questions Frequency	Contextualized Questions Frequency
Teacher1	44	33
Teacher2	44	40
Teacher3	17	8
Teacher4	27	23
Teacher5	13	10
Teacher6	69	41
Teacher7	30	24
Teacher8	41	20
Teacher9	7	24
Teacher10	0	1

## Appendix J

### Preschool Teachers' Proportion of

#### Decontextualized and Contextualized Questions

	Decontextualized Questions Proportion	Contextualized Questions Proportion
Teacher1	$44/77=0.57$	$33/77=0.43$
Teacher2	$44/84=0.52$	$40/84=0.48$
Teacher3	$17/25=0.68$	$8/25=0.32$
Teacher4	$27/50=0.54$	$23/50=0.46$
Teacher5	$13/23=0.57$	$10/23=0.43$
Teacher6	$69/110=0.63$	$41/110=0.37$
Teacher7	$30/54=0.56$	$24/54=0.44$
Teacher8	$41/61=0.67$	$20/61=0.33$
Teacher9	$7/31=0.23$	$24/31=0.77$
Teacher10	$0/1=0$	$1/1=1$

## Appendix K

### SLPs' Frequency of

#### Decontextualized and Contextualized Questions

	Decontextualized Questions Frequency	Contextualized Questions Frequency
SLP1	69	25
SLP2	22	31
SLP3	28	34
SLP4	73	40
SLP5	29	4
SLP6	25	13
SLP7	80	77
SLP8	6	0
SLP9	65	66
SLP10	40	63

## Appendix L

### SLPs' Proportion of

#### Decontextualized and Contextualized Questions

	Decontextualized Questions Proportion	Contextualized Questions Proportion
SLP1	$69/94=0.73$	$25/94=0.27$
SLP2	$22/53=0.42$	$31/53=0.58$
SLP3	$28/62=0.45$	$34/62=0.55$
SLP4	$73/113=0.65$	$40/113=0.35$
SLP5	$29/33=0.88$	$4/33=0.12$
SLP6	$25/38=0.66$	$13/38=0.34$
SLP7	$80/157=0.51$	$77/157=0.49$
SLP8	$6/6=1$	$0/6=0$
SLP9	$65/131=0.5$	$66/131=0.5$
SLP10	$40/103=0.39$	$63/103=0.61$